



*H. W. Lachlan*



# McLACHLAN : AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

*By*  
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## PREFACE

To my living friends I dedicate this book. There are many in the professional, political and business world for whose worth I have a high regard.

Having read the book after completion, I exclaimed:

“Thou minds me o’ departed joys,  
Departed—never to return.”

My hope is that my varied experience may serve to guide any young Australian, who may peruse it, on his journey through life.

A. J. McLACHLAN.







# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. EARLY YEARS .....	11
II. MEMORIES .....	17
III. CHARACTER .....	26
IV. SCHOOL DAYS .....	31
V. STUDY .....	37
VI. THE LAW .....	43
VII. BENCH AND BAR .....	65
VIII. PROFESSIONAL LIFE .....	72
IX. COMMERCE .....	94
X. SPORT .....	100
XI. POLITICS .....	116
XII. THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS .....	135
XIII. ADMINISTRATIVE .....	162
XIV. POETRY .....	215
XV. TRIBUTES .....	221
XVI. NATIONAL INSURANCE .....	224
XVII. A CHANGE OF FRONT .....	253
XVIII. WAR .....	263
XIX. THE OUTLOOK .....	276





## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

THE AUTHOR .....	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	FACING PAGE
THE AUTHOR AT 2½ YEARS .....	32
THE AUTHOR AT 18 YEARS .....	33
THE AUTHOR'S MOTHER .....	64
THE AUTHOR'S FATHER .....	65
THE AUTHOR'S WIFE .....	128
THE AUTHOR'S GRANDMOTHER .....	129
THE AUTHOR'S BROTHER .....	129
RECEPTION TO T.R.H. THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF YORK (NOW THEIR MAJESTIES THE KING AND QUEEN) IN ADELAIDE, 1927 .....	152
SIR GEORGE PEARCE AND AUTHOR GOLFING .....	153





## EARLY YEARS

I HAVE often observed that men with wide experience and extraordinary knowledge in the various affairs of life have passed away, and their experiences and their knowledge have been lost to humanity because they have not chosen to record them.

It is not in any spirit that this is the life of a great man that I have embarked on this work. I realise full well that my experiences, varied though they may be, may not be of much value to youth, because each follows his own inclination and sets his own course in life, sometimes with deliberation, and sometimes fecklessly.

When one approaches the allotted span of human existence one engages in retrospection. You are inclined to look backward rather than to look forward. You revert to the days of your youth. A certain nostalgia for the surroundings of your youth appears to seize upon you. You realise the many lessons that experience has taught, and you hope that some of them may be of value to those who come after.

After a varied life in the law, in business and in politics I have been seized with a desire in my declining years to end my days, as far as is possible, in the atmosphere of my youth, and when I remember that my parents and grandparent frequently, in the soft Gaelic tongue, as their years increased, spoke of the Western Highlands with all their beauty and romance, and seemed to long for a return to their homeland, I can quite understand the presence in my blood of a similar desire. I think the spirit will be found in most people with an even temperament.

My childhood and early youth were spent amongst merino



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

flocks in a land which abounded with game, from the massive and imposing "old man" kangaroo to the fleet emu. Ducks in profusion spread their flight from swamp to swamp. All manner of game existed. The mountain duck was to be found. The head of the male bird has a colouring of unsurpassed beauty. The kookaburras' rude laughter resounded. The wild, weird call of the curlew was to be heard. The screech of the yellow-crested cockatoo was a familiar sound. The native companion engaged in a graceful minuet on the plains. Under such conditions my early youth was spent, in the happiest of family circles.

Tutors and governesses were secured for one's early training. I never found it hard to study from my first initiation, but when I was forced to play the five-finger exercises preparatory to embarking on a limited musical education my little soul revolted, and when I had mastered my musical studies so far as to be able to play "Nelly Bly," my father took compassion on my unmusical soul, and determined that I should not have any classical attainment in music at least. There is no wonder I revolted. I am tune deaf, and while the skirl of the bagpipes or a band playing martial music seems to quicken the blood circulation, I am not able to recognise a flat note, and have in consequence been guilty of many a faux pas.

I remember the men who were employed on the station. I remember their escapades, their courage and their capacity. I also recollect some of the more or less ribald songs—some in Gaelic—the shearers sang, for I have always had an ear for verse. A number of the shearers were Gaels, and years afterwards, when crossing the loch in the north of Scotland at Fort William, the men in charge of the ferry burst into song in Gaelic, I alighted from the car and having mustered a few Gaelic phrases addressed their leader. The silence that followed was astounding. He informed me that when the usquebaugh was in the spirit would come out. I promptly informed him that there must be a still



## EARLY YEARS

on the heather-clad hillside, as down in Edinburgh and in London I had found whisky very expensive indeed. I think he regarded me as a revenue officer, because I observed that he watched the departure of my car with my party, and seemed relieved.

What men those on the station were! Some with a classical education whose failing in life had been caused by excessive indulgence in liquor; some there were who feared nothing. I remember one lad in particular for whom my father had a soft spot. His name was Bobby—I won't give his surname—and he was engaged on one occasion in late March in adzing out a huge tree which had to be converted into a trough and dragged by the bullocks to an adjacent well. Another man and he were busy on the work and hurried unduly to complete the job owing to the advent of the Penola races, the great event of the south-eastern district of South Australia, held in the month of March. His adze slipped, its razor-like edge struck his right ankle and severed, or partly severed, the sinew by which the foot is attached to the leg. Fortunately, a boundary rider with his horse was close by, and galloped to the homestead for help. Our tutor at the time had some experience of first-aid, and went out in a wagonette and brought the unfortunate Bobby home. A doctor was procured, and the necessary action taken, Bobby being housed for the time being in a room adjacent to the homestead. He was a restless spirit, and within a few days asked for crutches, and moved about with the foot strapped to the upper part of his leg, in a wealth of bandages.

The races were approaching, and Bobby sought permission from my father to go to the races. The vehicle my father was using was unsuitable to allow him to stretch out, and this being explained to him, he promptly suggested that he should be allowed to ride my eldest sister's horse with her side-saddle, over which he could put his leg, and as the horse was a well-paced animal he could attend the



racés. Notwithstanding the protests of my grandmother, who was a woman of some force of character, and my mother, my father yielded to Bobby's representations, and he travelled the 14 miles in the side-saddle.

Apparently he embarked on his enjoyment without regard to his condition, and my father had to be ultimately summoned to get him properly on his feet, and a wagonette conveyance had to be brought from a neighbouring station to secure the return of the somewhat bedraggled Bobby.

He was one of the tough kind. He took his enjoyment and he took his ill-luck in his stride.

There were others. I remember one whose knowledge of the classics was undoubted. He had Horace's Odes in a small book, and very often read them. My recollection of him is in a swallow-tail coat leaving the station shaven and in a good state of health. He was an extraordinarily neat and competent gardener, but could not refrain from liquor for more than a year or eighteen months, and when he came to tell my father that he was going away for his holiday, no suggestion that his cheque, or portion of it, should be banked for him made any appeal. He was going down to Adelaide, he would say, "to get a fresh rigout." He never reached further than some of the neighbouring towns, and came back contrite and much the worse for wear.

He was the essence of patience. I remember on one occasion my father's pet cockatoo, who was allowed at large, watching this old gardener planting the cabbages out in the vegetable garden. He spent all the morning putting the small plants in the holes, the fingers pressing around the butts. There must have been at least a couple of hundred planted when the time for the mid-day meal arrived. The cockatoo had been watching the operation with great interest from the top of the garden fence, and when the man departed for his meal, cocky proceeded to deal with the plants by cutting them off just above the ground, and leaving their heads severed from the plants.



## EARLY YEARS

Nothing was ever done to cocky, but such were the troubles that came about from the possession of pets.

The shearers arrived like a cavalcade. There were 14 men on the board shearing; there were pressers and pickers-up and wool winders, cook and cook's offsider. They arrived per horse—two to a man—and frequently, as we were in a fairly late district, sought permission to shoot kangaroo, which abounded later on in the year. This permission was often granted, and on one occasion I can recollect well the excitement that took place when their camp was blown up.

In those days the rifles they used were enormous weapons. They made their own bullets of lead in a mould; they made their own cartridges, and put the cartridge through the mouth of the rifle, in short, it was a muzzle-loading weapon. The percussion cap was fitted, and woe betide the kangaroo which was struck with the bullet that emerged. I think the rifles were those that remained over when Australia was arming itself against a mythical Russian invasion. As a small boy I could scarcely lift one.

On this particular occasion the supplies, kegs of powder, a quantity of lead, caps, etc., were ordered, and were brought out by the teamster amongst the station provisions. The powder was in small barrels more or less exposed. The stuff was delivered to the kangarooers, accompanied, as it was approaching Christmas, by a considerable quantity of liquor of various kinds. Apparently on Christmas Day they "threw" a party, and invited a boundary rider in my father's employ to attend it. After the festivities had ended one of them proceeded to light his pipe while sitting on one of the powder kegs. Something evidently happened, and he was blown into the fork of a tree. The camp was practically wrecked. Aid was procured through the medium of the boundary rider, and although these men were knocked about, and the man sitting on the keg had to be rescued from the tree, yet apart from first-aid rendered from the



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

homestead none of them ever saw a doctor. They were a tough race, and when I look round me to-day and see the ills from which we suffer, and the accidents which are being magnified, I wonder if we are not getting a little soft! I "moralise on the decay of Scottish strength in modern day."



## MEMORIES

MEMORY is a curious thing! I have a vivid recollection of one happening, possibly because I was requested to do something. Action impresses itself on one in an unmistakable fashion.

A new house was being built. I could not have been three years of age when the move was made from the habitation which we had used upon arrival at the station. I can recollect nothing concerning the removal except this, that I was entrusted with a bottle of salad oil to carry up to the kitchen of the new establishment. I have a distinct recollection even of my movements. I had several hundred yards to go, and paused on the way to examine a stump which had been grubbed, and under which 24 snakes were alleged to have been taken and killed.

I have little recollection of any other events, but later when the tutor came, I have a vivid memory of the various personalities of tutors we had, and finally, when my eldest sister and brother were sent to boarding school in Victoria, the advent of a governess I recollect full well.

The family were taken to the Melbourne Exhibition in 1881, when I was under nine years of age. It was my first train journey, and my first visit to the sea at St. Kilda. The weather was apparently calm, and I felt as Walter Savage Landor, I think, once put it, "Is this the mighty ocean, is this all?"

The train journey did not impress me unduly, but I can well remember the beautiful cherries that a clergyman procured at Hamilton. He has long since gone to his fathers, but was a most genial and kindly soul.

I have little recollection of the Exhibition. The spraying



waters and the fishes swimming in the various ponds still stay in the memory. The theatre which I was allowed to attend with the family left a somewhat formidable impression on my youthful brain, but one thing repelled me. It was the odour of the city. I longed for the fresh air of the country; I longed for the companionship of my dogs at the station, about whom I was constantly thinking.

Dogs have been my friends through life; they appeared to love me, and I certainly loved them. I have carried for life a mark of the undoubted affection that my father's pet dog, a Border collie named "Penny," had for me, even as a child. On a return from a day's work she always came to inspect me, but having become the mother of a litter of pups her affections were divided.

One evening on her return with my father I appeared to be lying in a bassinet outside the homestead, and Penny decided to pay her respects to me, which she did by licking my face, and one of her teeth must have touched my forehead above the eyebrow, leaving a mark which remains to this day. In her excitement to discharge what she considered to be her dual duties she apparently exercised a little more force in her great hurry. Family rumour hath it that I "roared like a bull," and Penny's attentions were somewhat curtailed.

A legal friend of my father's gave me my first dog, a stag-hound called "Bodger." This dog was the soul of friendliness. I chained him up and I let him off, and was allowed to accompany the man when he fed him. He was an enormous animal, put his paws on my shoulders and frequently forced me down, licked my face and proceeded to gambol round. My recollection fails to remember what became of my prize Bodger. Something must have happened, because the legal man replaced him with a pure-bred greyhound, who was named "Swift."

My brother had also a greyhound called "Lion," and there were other dogs of a similar breed kept to keep the



## MEMORIES

kangaroos and hares in check. For some reason or other my father determined that no more greyhounds were to be kept, and both Lion and Swift were sent back to their former owner in the town of Narracoorte, some 25 miles away. One night they made their escape and travelled through two stud flocks, and were seen by a station manager killing on the property. He shot them both, very properly. My youthful indignation I can well remember. Years after I learned to know how wisely he had acted, and even in these days, when I have had to destroy marauding dogs in scores, I always do so with regret.

I was given a sheep dog, no doubt to soothe my ruffled spirit. My brother also possessed a dog, and while he was absent at school I was entrusted with the care of the two, and, when my father sold the station and we were moving to Mount Gambier, these two dogs were my particular care. We stayed in Penola over night, and on a bleak 24th May I remember sitting in the back seat of a buggy with the two dogs, my father, my younger sister and mother in front, and travelling in a tremendous downpour of rain to Mount Gambier. I would not relinquish my dogs until I saw them housed in a loosebox and fed, although I was soaked through.

Dogs have an extraordinary intelligence. They seem to read your temperament; they seem to know when anything of an emotional character touches you. Other animals may have the same sense. A horse maybe understands man when he is closely associated with a particular individual, but a dog seems to sense your state of mind. I have never feared a dog, and all dogs appear to be friendly.

While on dogs let me recount a story which is true, and which will surprise even those who appreciate the dog talent. With an esteemed friend, I attended a race meeting at Caulfield, and was invited, in company with my friend, as it was a very hot afternoon, to drive round to a successful owner's residence after the last race and have some cool



refreshment. My friend and myself got away early and arrived at the gate of our friend's residence before he did. As I alighted from the car I was confronted by a huge Alsatian. I could not read in his eye whether he was friendly or not, and called to my friend, who was just a few yards away, to have a look at him. He was the only dog as to which I have not been able to judge by his eye his friendliness or otherwise. Before I could determine the question of whether we would venture in, the wife of the owner came along for her car and he was all smiles, took her handbag and parasol in his mouth and marched triumphantly up to the front of the house.

While we were refreshing ourselves on the verandah I asked to be allowed to give him a biscuit, which he promptly took, and then, on my expressing my admiration for his apparent intelligence, I was told a story which serves to illustrate the extraordinary intelligence of dogs.

The owner, who had a tolerably large establishment, neither locks nor closes in the summer nights the doors of his house. This huge Alsatian keeps watch and ward. The children of the family slept in a room on one side of the house, where the wife's sister occupied a room on one side, and on the other side, the maids. The owner and his wife slept in an adjacent room.

A member of the family became ill at Ballarat, and the lady of the house, whose sister she was, went down for a few days, and, as the patient was making a good recovery, she invited her other sister to come down by the evening train and return with her the following morning. Being left alone, the owner, who was afoot tolerably early in the morning to see his horses perform, went to his room at an early hour, closed the door to prevent the dog disturbing him, and was awakened about two o'clock by a vigorous knocking at the door. He switched on the light and opened the door, to find that this hound had been pawing at the door. He felt there was something amiss, and stood watching the dog, who caught him by the coat sleeve of



## MEMORIES

his pyjamas and literally dragged him down to the corner room, where the sister-in-law was supposed to sleep. He took him in; my friend switched on the light, the dog then let go his pyjama sleeve and sat down and looked at him, then looked at the bed. He was so struck by the performance that he simply watched the dog, who became a little impatient apparently at his not observing what he had so patently seen. The dog finally jumped on the bed, put his head under the pillows, threw them about, got down and stood in front of his master, gazing in his face, as much as to say: "Look, she is not here, and she should have been!"

I thought it was one of the best stories—and I can vouch for its truth—that I have ever heard illustrating canine intelligence.

"Dogs dream, so do horses," writes the poet. I once possessed a Cocker of more than average intelligence, and very often at night, as I studied documents under an outdoor light, he came and slept at my feet. Disturbing noises and yelps arose while he slept, and suddenly he would jump to his feet, stand foursquare for a few minutes, and make off with great rapidity. Shortly he would return, at times bewildered, but always with some dirt on the tip of his nose. He would sit down, apparently deep in thought, and in a few more minutes would push off again, sometimes not to return for a considerable time.

I took care to examine his *modus operandi*, and I found that he awoke and paused, but always terminated the matter by rushing off to the back garden, where he had a habit of burying bones. When he returned he was apparently disappointed; he had made a mistake, but usually on the second effort he would locate his bone and proceed to deal with it.

The dog had evidently dreamed of his bones. This must have excited his hunger, and, while he paused after waking up for a moment or two, he was apparently in deep cogita-



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

tion, ransacking his memory as to where his best bone had been left.

In commercial circles the executives of large concerns sometimes fear that the succeeding years' figures may not reach the previous standard and proceed to stow away a certain amount of reserve. I heard a rather witty director accuse one of them one day of "burying bones." The impeachment was quite true, but the foresight proved to be well justified in the years to come.

To the young man I would say: Have a dog, treat him well, and he will be one of your best and surest friends.

To-day I have the Border Collie, the most intelligent probably of any canine breed. They seem to have an inherent instinct for working sheep. Occasionally they do not display the instinct to advantage, but many dogs are a real joy to their owners in the way they handle the flock and seem to understand their masters' intentions immediately they are put round a mob of sheep. Many stories have been told of the intelligence of dogs in rounding up the killing sheep on a station. You merely sharpen the knife on a steel, and the dog goes off at once.

I have rather suspected that these dogs love the results of the slaughter, in so much as they have tit-bits, rather than display the particular prowess which is so well illustrated in many of their kind.

A dog I have to-day, who is in charge of my friend and manager, only has to see a movement of the sheep to leave all my blandishments and pettings to attend to what he believes to be his job of work.

A dog should have plenty of room to roam, and the misfortune of the man in the city is that there are not enough opportunities to give the dog exercise such as he undoubtedly requires. Dogs must suffer in the city. They love the open spaces.

As a family group we were extremely attached to each other, and my affections were such that I think if anything



## MEMORIES

had happened to any one of the household I would scarcely have survived myself.

My brother was almost eight years older than myself, and it was he who guided my footsteps in my earlier years, taught me to ride and shoot—in a very primitive manner, I admit—and we formed a lifelong regard for each other. We were pals and we were confidants as well as brothers, a condition of things that continued to his death. We gambled together, we raced together, and each gave to the other his entire confidence. My feelings are well expressed in the lines of Goldsmith's "Traveller":

"Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,  
My heart, untravelled, fondly turns to thee.  
Still to my brother turns with ceaseless pain,  
And drags at each remove a lengthening chain."

He rarely took an important step without consulting me, and I might say that, apart from professional services, I consulted him on all material movements in my career. He has gone, but memories remain—memories of his extraordinary acumen, memories of his knowledge in his particular calling; memories of the many ideas he had in the realms of stock raising, and even of horse racing. As I write I observe in the press of this country reference to the barriers from which racehorses have to be started. Over thirty years ago my brother had patented and had used in South Australia, when Chairman of Tattersall's Club, the McLachlan starting gate. These things are forgotten except by the few.

I remember his sturdy perseverance in crossing his sheep in such a way as to produce a maximum of wool, and still preserve the carcase value of his flock. I remember his trip to England and his purchase of a Hapsburg mare, Tellermana, the mother of White Nose, with whom he won the Melbourne Cup. This was not mere chance. This was an insight into the crossing of various lines of blood with the



idea that he would produce a first-class stayer. These are the unacknowledged contributions that he made in the various fields in which his interest lay. His passing left a blank in my life.

My late wife, who herself passed away over two years later, created a "garden of memory" in my home. It was a happy thought, and no doubt induced by a story I was able to tell her of a father in a town in Wales.

After a long day's motoring my wife and her women guests elected to rest after dinner, while I and my male companion went wandering round the little Welsh city and along the riverbed, which was well laid out and terraced, until we came to a gate with a beautiful scroll upon it. The ground beyond was most enticing, beautifully kept, well laid out and adorned with some magnificent trees. While we stood gazing at the beautiful enclosure a grey-headed gentleman strolled up to us and enquired if we were admiring the garden. We told him we thought it was most beautiful. He thereupon asked if we would like to go in. On our expressing a wish to do so, he promptly unlocked the gates and accompanied us on a stroll through the best-kept grounds it has ever been my pleasure to see. No comments were made until, darkness drawing on, he ushered us out through the gates, and in substance told us the following story:

His wife was dead. His only son—a professional man of some repute—was killed in the '14-18 war while leading his company, and he said that he had prepared the place—it was really a park—as a garden of memory to remind him of his dead son. I remarked to him that it was an extremely fine thought. With almost sadness in his voice he bade us "Good evening," and passed on his way. I told the story to my party on my return to the hotel, and I could not get out of my mind for some time that lonely figure, who each day apparently found solace in visiting this which he called his "garden of memory."

My marriage on the 1st June, 1898, began one long life



## MEMORIES

of bliss. Forty-three years of unalloyed happiness is more than falls to the lot of most men, but we led together a full life, and while at times my wife's health prevented her full enjoyment, on the whole we probably had more of human happiness than is the lot of the majority of our fellows. We shared our joys, we shared our disappointments, we shared our travel; in short, we shared our lives. The blow of parting was hard to bear. Time is a great healer, but the loneliness remains.



## CHARACTER

POPE once said: "The proper study of mankind is man." One, I think, should study one's self, should observe the change in temperament as the years go by, and endeavour to ascertain and examine the cause. I have made such a self-analysis to the best of my ability.

Born after four of the family had been carried off by a diphtheritic scourge I was made much of. My grandmother, as I favoured in colouring and appearance the McLachlan clan, gave me her special patronage. My most devoted of mothers, whose hair had turned white by her sorrow, doted upon me, and I have no doubt my father refrained from exercising the discipline that he would otherwise have done. I felt myself master of my own destiny, and held forth about all my wants, mostly about dogs, guns and ponies.

I remember my own insolence at the dining table in engaging in a cry, as my father took his seat, of, "I want a pony." I continued repeating this meal after meal, no doubt at the instance to some extent of my elder brother while he was at home, who seemed to think it was amusing to bait my parent. I had learned to ride on my sister's hack, and I, no doubt, felt that this was an indignity to which I should not be subjected.

My persistence was ultimately rewarded by the purchase of a pony at Katnook station, and my wailings were discontinued.

I have only one recollection of sternness on the part of my father towards myself. A specific for children in those days was sulphur mixed with treacle. While it was so administered, the pleasantness of the treacle made some



## CHARACTER

appeal, but on one occasion it was decided that I required the sulphur, and it was dissolved in whisky, whose flavour I did not appreciate, and I refused to take the medicine from the hands of my mother. My grandmother was summoned, but I still rebelled and danced about, I can remember so well, on the bed in my nightgown. My father was just on the point of leaving, and was called in by my mother, riding whip in hand. He pointed the whip at me and said no more than, "Take it!" I swallowed the potion somewhat reluctantly.

When my father sold the property there was great emotion on the part of my grandmother and mother. They shed tears and voiced great regrets at parting from what were our pleasant and fortunate surroundings, but the die was cast, and when the stock were taken over at valuation my father found himself confronted by his mother, my grandmother, who wanted a cheque for all her cattle and all the boy's cattle—the boy being myself—and for all my mother's cattle, and a couple of thoroughbred horses that my eldest sister, who was away at boarding school, had acquired by gift. My grandmother triumphed, and my father produced cheques for myself, my mother and grandmother, and said he would take my sister's two thoroughbred horses down to Mount Gambier amongst some others which he was retaining.

My grandmother promptly banked the cheque for something over £40 to my credit in the Savings Bank, but retained the passbook in her own custody. My father vowed and declared that there would be no more transactions after we moved to Mount Gambier, but before long a distant relative of my grandmother's from Victoria visited us at the family home. He was a stud master, and my grandmother cajoled from him a stud Shorthorn cow which he presented to me, enjoining on me at the same time to keep the calf, as, if it were a bull, it would be of considerable value. The cow—a snow-white one—arrived and gave birth



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

to a bull calf, which, after a year or two, became the bane of my existence.

He turned out a magnificent animal, but the Shorthorn in him revolted against his environment on 94 acres at the homestead, and he sought to try conclusions with all the neighbouring bulls, breaking fences and getting us into all sorts of trouble. My father ultimately threatened to destroy him unless I got rid of him, and with a promise of a gift of some of his progeny, I sent him with a flock to a stud master some 70 miles away. About three weeks after his arrival at the stud, I found him one morning standing, somewhat bedraggled, at a gate outside our property. Some enquiry elicited the fact that after a couple of days' sojourn with the stud flock, his homing instinct asserted itself, and he returned the whole 70 miles, dealing with any stray bulls in the interval.

His return was a blow. Although a stud Shorthorn, no one in the district would take him, as his methods and activities were too well known, and ultimately, to my lasting regret, he had to be destroyed.

My banking account still continued to be increased by the realisations of foals from a pony and calves from the stud cow. There were no withdrawals. My grandmother saw to it that every penny I got went into my banking account. She instilled into us all the necessity of looking after the pence, always maintaining large flocks of fowls, turkeys and ducks while at the station, but limiting herself on arrival at Mount Gambier to fowls and turkeys. These wandered all over the place, laid in the hedges, and notwithstanding the activities of my grandparent, the turkeys contrived occasionally to go towards the homestead, trailing a brood.

Some domestic infelicity was caused by the attacks of these fowls and turkeys on a considerable vegetable garden which my father had put in. He contrived, however, by his Border Collies to keep his plots clear of the intrusion



## CHARACTER

of these marauders, and sometimes the dogs dealt a little savagely with my grandmother's flocks. Then she exhibited an impotent rage, melting finally into tears, and promptly retired to her room, absented herself from the evening meal, and would be comforted in the morning through the good offices of my mother, who would persuade my father to bring her a cup of coffee well laced, which seemed to restore the domestic relationship.

Such was the atmosphere in which I was reared. There is another angle to it: the religious one. The Gaelic Bible was regularly read, and there was a long Gaelic grace before each meal. All forms of sport, even to reading the newspapers, were taboo on Sunday. It was a day of devotion. My mother was a devout and very God-fearing woman. She perused her Bible to the end of her days, and at the end with very great difficulty, owing to failing eyesight. My grandmother's devotion was on a minor scale. She was a realist, if such a thing ever existed. Born in the Highlands of Scotland, and living one hundred years and three months of life, she remembered the Napoleonic wars, and, as news in the Western Highlands of Scotland in those days was transmitted from mouth to mouth, she frequently told us how, as a young girl, in company with others, they used to cry out to each other across the lochs and from the hill sides: "Is Bonaparte winning?" This was in the Gaelic tongue, which I shall not attempt to reproduce, but it was most euphonious.

My mother's devotion was bred in her. She was a distant kinswoman of Dr Norman McLeod, whose eloquence and religious fervour were so well-known in Scotland.

My father subscribed with proper solemnity to the religious devotions of the family, and, although I suspected him of not being as devout as he desired us to be, he gave no outward indication that this was so.

I have seen my grandmother attend the shearing shed, and, with my father's assistance, select some fine fleeces and



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

have them brought to her quarters. She washed and carded them, and, having done so, spun the wool on her spinning wheel, a huge contraption, as black as ebony. I suspect it was made of oak. From the wool so spun she knitted, and persuaded my mother to knit, stockings and socks for the whole family. As years took their toll, the spinning wheel was relegated to an outhouse at Mount Gambier, and, much to my regret, was given away by one of my sisters.



## SCHOOL DAYS

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,  
These three alone lead life to sovereign power."

My father's move to Mount Gambier was, no doubt, actuated by the fact that I should require some school discipline away from home. After a short sojourn, and having settled in this delightful district, I was sent away with my brother to the Hamilton Academy, a Presbyterian institution conducted on excellent lines by the headmaster, one James Begg.

My brother was in the senior class there, and my father, no doubt, thought that his presence would help to minimise the rigours of a boarding school for a youngster of under 12 years.

The tears of my grandparent and my mother showed their regret. It was no greater than mine. My father accompanied me on the first occasion, and was in close conclave for a couple of days with the headmaster and the senior masters. My heart misgave me as I left him. I felt that a new era was opening, and so it befell. My undisciplined character had been very marked. At home I had my own way in everything. I had never been punished, and my temper was, no doubt, violent. It is only in looking back that one sees the wisdom of my parents in taking the step they did. Notwithstanding all their great affection for me, my father must have convinced them that to allow me to grow up undisciplined would be to inflict an injury upon me and my character in after life.

I was put in the small boys' dormitory at school and subjected to the usual humiliations of a new boy. These humiliations were attended by somewhat disastrous results.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

I fought, not only with my feet and hands, but with every weapon at my disposal. I managed to refrain from shedding tears, but day by day, having been allotted several opprobrious nicknames, I used cricket wickets, cricket bats or any weapon that came in my way to defend myself and resent the insults.

I do not know, it may have been my pure Highland blood that resented ridicule or opprobrium of any sort. My habits apparently did not pass unobserved by the masters, who took part in the boys' games, and who unobtrusively watched our behaviour.

Every evening, prior to our studies, we were given an hour's boxing, and I remember full well when I was given the boxing gloves, which I had never handled before, having watched a prior match, I engaged in a real fight. As I was a fairly stalwart youngster, they gave me lads much older than myself, and I took some punishment, but, as I was fairly strong, I gave some punishment. There was no science in the game, it was a case of fight it out to the end. The end was usually a bleeding nose or a black eye, but quickly I learned that slogging was of little use, and a little later on I was told I had to join the boxing class and have tuition from a boxing master who attended twice a week. I have no doubt this move was inspired by my father in conjunction with the senior master, a man of splendid character.

The tutor was not a heavy man, but was in the pink of condition, and week after week he taught me to learn to defend myself, and also the best methods of attack. My temper seemed to ease down slightly when I had to face an opponent, but still I resented all intrusions on my privacy and all reflections on my appearance, although jocularly made by my fellows.

For some months I was in constant wars. Fights there were galore, and I think, although the process was gradual, I managed to get comparative control of myself, hastened





*Author at 2½ years.*





*Author at 18 years.*



## SCHOOL DAYS

by an incident which almost leaves me cold when I think of it to-day.

I had succeeded in asserting myself in the small boys' dormitory where I was housed, and remained there in comparative security from insult, and imagined myself the head of about 15 small boys. The boys in the upper classes, some 30 or 40 in number, slept in the larger dormitory. We had our cold shower at 6 o'clock in summer, and 6.30 in the winter. The small boys had to wait their turn for the four bathrooms that were available, and, in an endeavour to get myself warm one morning while waiting my turn, I took a large Indian club, made of red gum, which I could only swing with both hands, and was proceeding to get some exercise when a school-fellow from the larger dormitory, just returning from his bath, peered into the room and asked me what I was doing. I resented his intrusion, and told him to keep away and to get out. He promptly proceeded to flick me on the most exposed part of my anatomy with his wet bath towel, which stung. I told him I would hit him with the club which I was swinging. He dashed at me. I hit him right in the face as hard as I could. He fell on his knees, blood spurted from his nose and mouth all over my bed. Frankly, I thought I had killed him, and I rushed for my bath.

Three of the maids were McDonalds and had a soft spot in their heart for a kid who could speak the Gaelic tongue. On my return from my bath I found my bed saturated with blood, but the intruder I could not see. I went to the girls and told them what had happened, giving my version of the incident, and, with their Highland loyalty, they proceeded to clean up the dreadful mess. So the knowledge was kept from the inspecting master, whose duty it was to examine the dormitories.

We went to our morning studies. I was somewhat scared of the consequences of my action and was greatly relieved when my victim came in the study door with an enormous nose and swollen lips. He was confronted by the master,



who asked him what had happened. He said: "I ran into a door, sir." My respect for him mounted, but for several days I kept well out of his way, but was finally cornered in the football room, where there was a shower and a series of lockers, because the big boys wore football boots which were shod with steel heels and steel toecaps. There was no escape, he was at the door. Fortunately, the lockers ran to the ceiling and I was able to clamber up. I got to the top, opened a locker, seized on a football boot well shod, and holding it by the top said that if he touched me I would brain him. He evidently thought, although he was about three times my size, that discretion was the better part of valour, and took his departure. All apparently was forgiven, but it taught me a lesson.

Shortly afterwards that same lad fought a boy about five years my elder because he had assaulted me in a cowardly fashion, and knocked my head against a wall with brutal force. I may say I was not altogether blameless, because I had tripped him up as he came, and took from myself and a friend the morning paper. I knew his venom in striking me was due to the fact that I could thrash his younger brother. The gallantry of the big chap whom I had bashed with the club rather appealed to me, and I never encountered any trouble at his hands, and showed him some respect.

I remember well the fight he had with the lad who had knocked me about. If he had once hit the other fellow I think he would have killed him. He was of enormous proportions, but did not know how to handle himself, and was sent from Melbourne, where I believe his people resided, to the country to try to build him up.

My temper even extended to the field of sport. I remember one day we were playing football. I got a mark. A fellow punched the ball from under my elbow, and I hit him in the jaw very promptly. He turned out to be one of my best friends. I used to go to his mother's home—an attention which was much appreciated by a boy in a boarding school.



## SCHOOL DAYS

It took me at least two years to get complete control of myself. I mention these facts because a lesson is to be learned. Parents who bring up children that have, perhaps by force of circumstances, been allowed a great deal of latitude, will find that they are undisciplined. They have to pay for it in after life unless it is cured in their youth, and I take off my hat to the foresight of my parents, who saw what was necessary in my case. My upbringing, probably while I remained at home, could not have been different owing to the sad circumstances which surrounded my arrival, but the wisdom of the step that was taken I applaud and commend to parents who find themselves so circumstanced.

Boxing is the best thing for a boy. It teaches him not only to defend himself, but to control himself. He learns to be wary. He learns that brute force cannot prevail against scientific effort.

My stay at school in Hamilton was, on the whole, happy. My brother had left, and I enjoyed my holidays at home on my return, and I enjoyed many pleasant week-ends at the homes of many of the day scholars, some of whom were daily boarders, having their mid-day meal with the other scholars who boarded. We made many friends.

I took prizes at school. Some of them I still possess, some have disappeared. Bible history, I remember, I excelled in. I had heard a lot of it in my own home. Mathematics were never any trouble, and I took more than one prize in mathematical subjects. English history and literature I revelled in.

We had walks and paper-chases, but I only won one prize in athletics. It was a race for lads under 14, and it was the first year I was at school. I was no runner, and they gave me a start. I think it was ten yards. I remember winning by a considerable margin, but that is all I remember. I never knew how I did it, and in the after years, having so distinguished myself, I was never given a chance, because they always thought I was better than I pretended. I certainly was strong, but I was not fleet of foot.

My brother had left a considerable reputation behind him



for athletics in the jumping line, and I suppose the handicappers thought that such prowess must run in the family.

The end of my happy stay in Hamilton came about owing to the fact that, after a paper-chase, we boys who had escaped the master, decided to cross a creek on a bridge of wire. The wire broke and we were all immersed in the creek. As this was out-of-bounds, we hid ourselves, in our wet clothing, and as it was just prior to the winter holidays, I arrived home with a very severe attack of bronchitis. As a result, I was not allowed to return to Hamilton, but was sent to a local institution run by a clergyman of the high church. I marched to this school day by day, and finally my father urged that I should pass my matriculation. I spent the year 1888 being coached by the senior master. Cicero's orations were rather much for me, and at the matriculation examination, which was held at Hamilton, I failed in Latin, which prevented my entering the university as a law student. How I passed in anything is rather beyond me, because during the year the senior master who had undertaken to tutor me took over a school at Narracoorte and I was sent down to complete my education there.

The friend of my youth, a lawyer who had given me many dogs, was a great sportsman. He and my tutor had week-end excursions to what I think is called the Yellow Creek, fishing and shooting. I accompanied them, and I am afraid gave much more attention to sport than to my studies. Half measures were no good, and I was accordingly sent to Adelaide, and, under the tutorship of an extremely able man, passed my senior public examination in the following November with flying colours.

My father determined that I should have a little hardening exercise after my eight months' sojourn in Adelaide, and I accordingly was made to ride, kill an occasional sheep, and make myself generally useful round the property, but in June my fate was sealed, and I was articled.



## STUDY

AFTER having been refreshed by six months of physical work, my father proceeded to arrange for me to be articled to Mr. Frank Davison, of the firm of Davison and Daniel, then engaged in a large practice in Mount Gambier. A dispensation from attending the university lectures was granted, and on the 1st July, 1890, I entered upon my duties of service as an articled clerk.

Mr. Davison had an enormous library, and the university had indicated the various lines of study. Williams' "Real" and "Personal" property, and a certain portion of Stephens' "Commentaries on the Laws of England" were indicated as part of my first year's work. I armed myself with Wharton's "Law Lexicon" and proceeded to wage my intellectual war on something I was far from understanding. A boy of 17 needed a different approach from being thrown into the midst of the history and technicalities of the law of real and personal property!

In after life I frequently discussed the university methods. A lad who has emerged from school finds it very difficult to follow the matter of estates in real property; in fact, the whole system appears at first beyond his comprehension.

I believe in later years the authorities have eased the position by making the approach through the realm of jurisprudence, which informs the student what our system of law really is, and makes the approach to the various branches much less difficult for the student, who really is overwhelmed, in fact, dazed, by the wealth of technical expressions for which nothing has been done to prepare him.

In my case I had embarked on the law at my own wish. Why I embraced the law is difficult to say, but I think the



dignity and manner of my father's legal adviser, and his kindness in presenting me with a staghound and some greyhounds had considerable effect. He was a man of most courteous habit and dignified demeanour, and my youthful mind must have been impressed by the qualities which I evidently thought the profession of the law brought into being.

Having chosen my course, I determined to work. I happened on Broom's "Legal Maxims," and I studied them through and through. Suffice to say that within three years I had passed all the subjects required for the certificated course in law, but still had to serve another two years in articles. By taking the degree I could relieve myself of these two years, and I took the necessary subjects in the Arts course, but I left untouched Roman law—an essential subject for the degree—and international law. I intended to take both these subjects after my admission, but the exigencies of business necessitated my devoting so much time to my professional work that no opportunity was afforded me of taking these two subjects. I am thankful to say that I never missed, although on one occasion in the Arts course I was far from sanguine about my success in a paper on deductive logic. My success apparently in the other branch, which was described to a student friend of mine as "a remarkable effort," must have pulled me through.

My student friends in the city were hospitality itself, and I attribute my failure in the paper on logic to some excesses, leaving me suffering from a bilious attack, which rather cramps one's mental effort.

To the boy entering a legal office the routine work is given. My first job was to copy a Deed of Assignment under Part XI of the Insolvent Act. It was an enormous job, with all the attendant proofs of debt, and had to be filed in the Insolvency Court branch.

There were many amusing incidents even in the work. Another early job that I had was to copy the correspondence in a breach of promise case for my master's brief. We were



## STUDY

for the lady, and she succeeded in getting some considerable amount of damages. The correspondence from the male, who appeared to me to be a half-wit, was largely in verse. Doggerel and drivel really describes it, and I think the lady had a merciful escape, judging by the quality of his efforts.

When I look back on my four years of service at Mount Gambier, two things strike me as indicating a certain amount of shrewdness. I knew my father would pay a pretty large sum for my articles, and, having a little cash of my own, I determined to insure my life, which I did in the local branch of the A.M.P. My father was unaware that I had done so and either the receipt for the half-yearly premium or the notice to pay it came by mistake into his hands. He asked me what it was all about. I informed him that I had insured my life for a sufficient sum to cover the premium which he had paid, and pointed out that if anything happened to me the family would not be so much worse off. He roared at me, but I apprehend that he appreciated my act of providence. I maintained the policy until it matured when I was 45.

Another incident in my twentieth and twenty-first years occurs to me in which I exhibited a certain amount of acumen and foresight. The bank failures of 1893 affected my father to a large extent as a depositor. In one institution certain shares were given for the portion of the deposit money. These were £10 shares. They were available on the market at 50/- each, and I suggested to my father that he should buy a considerable number and so recoup some of the money he had previously lost in another banking institution which had gone to the wall. He turned on me in no uncertain manner, expressed his opinion concerning banks and bank shares, and showed me a letter which he had received from his old master in Scotland warning him against trusting his money to a share-holding in banks and giving a full account of the machinations of the directors of the Bank of Glasgow. These gentlemen were tried before my father's old school-fellow, Sir Francis Clark, the Sheriff



of Glasgow. He would have none of it, but I had the satisfaction at least of seeing those shares rise until they had attained their full value of £10 each, and something over.

The latter portion of my articles I served in Adelaide with the Adelaide agents of my Mount Gambier principals, and here again I was fortunate in being associated with men of integrity and talent. Mr. E. B. Grundy, to whom my articles were assigned, had a highly analytical mind, and, like his Mount Gambier friend, Mr. Davison, a high conception of professional duty.

Mr. P. O'Dea was the managing clerk, and I found myself a cog in a much larger machine than that which operated in the Mount Gambier office. What advice Mr. Grundy had from his friend, Mr. Davison, I know not, but I was promptly made responsible for taking the proof or statement of evidence to be given by a plaintiff in a very heavy rescission action which had been launched prior to my arrival. The plaintiff was shown to my room, and, as the statement was tolerably lengthy and somewhat complicated, we struck up a friendship. He invited me to dine with him on several occasions, and one evening told me to buy some thousands of shares which were selling on the market for a few pence each. He asked me if I had any money, and said it did not matter, as I could buy beyond my means, the shares being sure to rise. This he knew, he said, from certain information that had been telegraphed him in code that day from Western Australia. I could feel he was animated by goodwill, and I accordingly bought a parcel of these shares. Each day they advanced, and when they reached a price, I think it was of 6/-, I sold the lot and made a profit of some £300 which I promptly banked.

In the meantime I began to get doubts about the capacity of my benefactor to stand up to cross-examination. Sir Josiah Symon was for the defendant, and his name struck terror into some clients, and also, might I add, into some counsel. I was somewhat diffident in mentioning the matter of my doubts to my principal, but I ultimately did



## STUDY

so, and advised that he should go through the proof personally with the client. He did so, with the result that we retained another leader of the Bar to assist at the hearing of the case. My friend, the plaintiff, cut an abominable figure in cross-examination. It was the first time that I had heard the leaders of the South Australian Bar in action. We lost the case, and my feeling was that we deserved to lose.

In the mining world there were currents and cross-currents of all sorts in those days, and a settlement was ultimately effected, the costs running into some thousands.

The time for my admission was at hand, and I saw the only other applicant, a man who afterwards proved himself as one of wonderful talent and learning, Mr. E. W. Benham. We decided to ask the Attorney-General, Mr. C. C. Kingston, to move for our admission. He agreed to do so.

I determined to celebrate the occasion in the orthodox, but somewhat expensive, fashion of a champagne luncheon, or perhaps it should be called a snack. I previously invited Mr. Grundy and Mr. Pelly, who was his partner, and Mr. Benham's principals to attend the little function, at which, of course, Mr. Kingston had to be present. A feud existed between my chief, Mr. Grundy, and the Attorney-General. Grundy wielded a vitriolic pen, and through the medium of a section of the morning press wrote most bitingly concerning Kingston and his administration. The feud was so bitter that, although they were of the same profession, they refused to speak.

Kingston apparently appreciated the difficulty of the position, and, having dashed in for a moment or two to the little function and having had a glass of wine, expressed his regret at having immediately to leave, owing to a prior engagement. This was the signal for my principal to arrive, and we had quite a merry morning. The hotel-keeper, a stern Scotchman, rebuked me very soundly for my extravagance. He said I should be ashamed of myself



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

for spending money in champagne, although it was going into his pocket.

My brother had come down from his station to the function. We proceeded to the races at Victoria Park and betted with some success. When settling my bill on Monday I was able to assure my kindly host of the United Service Club Hotel, when paying him some £48, that it had cost me nothing, because I had won that sum. He thereupon rebuked me for gambling, but receipted my account.

I paid a visit to my parents and my grandmother at Mount Gambier and announced my intention publicly of standing for the district of Victoria at the next State election.



## THE LAW

I LOOKED round for an opening in the country to commence practice. I had covenanted in my articles not to start practice within a radius of 100 miles of Mount Gambier. I selected Gladstone as a suitable centre. It was a circuit town. Laura—a flourishing centre—was a few miles away. Jamestown—an excellent district—was no great distance, and Crystal Brook was nearby.

I adventured the £300 that I had made in my mining speculation in the purchase of the nucleus of a library, and at the age of 22½ put up my shingle next door to the "Areas Express," a newspaper published in Gladstone.

My first client was a Chinaman, and my friends of the profession always claimed that "Chinaman's luck" attended my career. The Chinaman sought to recover a certain sum of money for goods sold and delivered. His accounts and figures were in his own language, but my manœuvring in correspondence which "John's" English staff conducted with the debtor ultimately secured an admission of the debt. Although the action was defended, the letter of admission was fatal, and I had not to participate in the awful struggle of detailed proof.

An odd will or two had to be prepared. I made my presence known at various centres, and was fortunate enough in a fencing case, which I conducted successfully, to score for a prominent Laura butcher.

Mr. E. H. Limbert, who had practised for some years successfully at Petersburg as it was then known, was desirous of getting to the city where he had been offered a partnership, and I acquired his practice in December, 1895, and moved from Gladstone, which, however, I visited periodically.



The Petersburg practice was a sound one. I succeeded to the retainers held by Mr. Limbert from various municipalities in the neighbourhood. Petersburg was a railway town. From the town itself there was not a great deal of business, but the surrounding district contained good patrons. I was under an obligation to Mr. Limbert to carry the practice on and to pay him a certain proportion of my profits. The town business really paid my office expenses, the expense of a clerk, and probably the cost of my living.

While here I had to embark on a political campaign with which I will deal in another connection, and had to have a locum to fulfil my obligations to Mr. Limbert while I was careering through the south-east of South Australia.

On my return I was fortunate enough to be retained in a criminal prosecution for embezzlement, and, while I did not secure a conviction, the Bench were good enough to congratulate me on the manner in which I had conducted the prosecution.

The second trial, before another judge, resulted in a disagreement by the jury and further congratulations from the Bench. Although both the judges who tried this case were distinguished lawyers, neither of them appeared to grasp the simplicity of what the accused had done. It was as simple as this: He would receive fifteen shillings and credit five shillings in the cashbook, which he himself kept. On the second occasion I limited the embezzlement items to three or four in which no great complexity was involved. Mr. P. McM. Glynn was an excellent defence counsel. A man of unbounded eloquence, he talked all round the question and with such a wealth of words that he practically hypnotised the jury into a state of doubt. He never really touched the question. The embezzlement had run into a considerable sum of money and my client had found it difficult to make both ends meet. I moved the full court to grant him something towards his expenses and the cost of the prosecution. I took this step under a section of



## THE LAW

the Criminal Law Consolidation Act which had apparently fallen into disuse. The application was vigorously opposed, but I succeeded in getting an order, which rather alarmed the Attorney-General's Department, and the costs were rigorously taxed by the Crown Solicitor, but it helped to relieve my client, who had suffered pretty severely.

I paid frequent visits to various country towns in the district, taking a local court action here and a police court case somewhere else. The train service was very convenient, and Petersburg was a good centre.

My political campaign—with which I shall deal in another chapter—served to bring me under the notice of the public and generally made me known.

Towards the end of '96 I was engaged in the first place by the people of Petersburg to attend the inquest on a child in Adelaide, drowned in the Torrens. The police were holding under arrest the mother, who was employed at one of the leading hotels. She was an exceedingly popular girl, and the expenses of my attendance at the inquest were provided by public subscription. The girl was committed for trial early in December, '96. The trial was embarked upon, and, in addition to the Crown Solicitor, Mr. Paris Nesbit, Q.C., was briefed by the Crown to prosecute. Mr. J. C. Hamp appeared with me for the defence.

The first trial resulted in a disagreement, the second in an acquittal. The case created tremendous interest, not only in the city, but in a section of the country press. It drew from the judge, Sir Samuel Way, whose summing up was certainly adverse to the accused, certain encomiums on my conduct of the case, which were broadcast throughout the country. The public crowded the Adelaide Supreme Court. The final decision was given just upon midnight. Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, the crowd outside the Supreme Court was considerable. Mr. Hamp and myself were cheered to the echo. Why, I know not. We



had only done our duty, but the publicity my success in this case afforded me was of untold value.

Briefs reached me from various country practitioners and my business at Petersburg practically doubled itself. I had a retainer from the Crown on more than one occasion, and, briefed by the Crown, I attended an inquest at Port Pirie which lasted for nearly fourteen days. Inspector Fraser, then a leading detective, assisted the Crown Law Office in the conduct of the prosecution. He has passed on, but those who were associated with him in his work knew how well and how courageously he did his duty.

The income of a young man who has just embarked on the law is, during the first year or two, very limited indeed. Clients are conservative and cautious creatures who consider very carefully one's experience and standing before entrusting their affairs in one's hands.

While I had, as it were, inherited a considerable body of business from Mr. Limbert, I found my work from January, 1897, greatly increased. I had retainers from other solicitors for defences at the Gladstone circuit, and when I was approached by Mr. C. C. Kingston to join him after the death of his previous partner, Mr. George Ash, early in 1897, I felt somewhat at a loss to decide the best course to pursue. I was only 24 years of age, but I had attained a position in the northern part of South Australia which was yielding me an income beyond my wildest dreams.

Just after the offer arrived I was engaged in the defence briefed by a Port Pirie solicitor at Gladstone, and took the liberty of consulting the presiding judge privately as to what course I should adopt. He was courteous enough to invite me to dine with him, and then proceeded to examine me as to the class of practice I had and the income I was earning. He finally wound up by pointing out to me that, while I might be sacrificing something at the moment, it would be beneficial in the long run for me to join Mr. Kingston, whose standing at the Bar was good and whose



practice was an excellent one. He referred to my practice as "a catch as catch can," and pointed out that a commercial practice was far more stable. He warned me, however, that while Kingston's practice was an excellent one, his private affairs were in a dreadful muddle, and under no circumstances to have anything to do with them.

I conferred with my brother at Paratoo over the weekend. He was always my confidant, and I determined to call and see Mr. Kingston. I did so, and found him most urbane. He transmitted to me through his firm's accountant all the figures I required, and in April, 1897, I linked my early fortune in partnership with that extraordinary man.

His legal talent was exceptional, but he devoted himself body and soul to the service of the public. Careless of his own financial future, his integrity in public life was admired by both his political friends and his political foes.

I had several briefs for various prisoners at circuit courts in various country centres, all of which I was compelled to hand over, as Mr. Kingston was Attorney-General, and his partner could not therefore act as the defender of prisoners under prosecution by him.

Shortly after I joined him he called at the office one day and informed me that he would be going to England officially, and asked that I should have a power of attorney prepared in my own favour in case anything should arise. This was done, and I found myself shortly after his departure saddled with the knowledge of his private affairs. He was apparently devoid of all money sense. In the roaring days of Broken Hill and early Coolgardie, he was one of a syndicate that had made considerable sums. He was also one of a syndicate that had invested largely in land in the neighbourhood of Adelaide, and, if my recollection is right, he and Sir Josiah Symon were two of the few who had been able to come through without facing bankruptcy.

The firm's accountant was supposed to look after his private affairs. My first shock was to get a bill for £480



for arrears of rent due by him to his father's estate. I enquired from the accountant what it all meant, and he frankly said that he could never get Mr. Kingston to attend to his own affairs, and that he had all sorts of odd obligations. I finally directed that a balance sheet should be made out showing his liabilities on the one side, and his assets on the other. To my amazement, he owed about £48,000, and had assets, which, in my opinion, were that day worth a little more than £20,000. He, of course, had his interest in the practice. I found he had undertaken an obligation to a bank for a near relation for £10,000, which had been debited to his account. He had agreed with his father's trustees to purchase the old home for either £10,000 or £12,000. The property, in my opinion, at the time, was worth only between £3,000 and £4,000. Such was the sentiment and conservative nature of the man that he would not allow a stranger to live where he and his brother and family had been reared. He would not allow a huge Moreton Bay fig to be uprooted, although its roots were interfering with the wall structure of the house. He had pieces of land scattered through the various Adelaide suburbs, some unbuilt upon, and some with cottages or small shops upon them.

Such was my regard for the man, and my esteem of his probity and general character, that I determined to see what could be done to straighten out his affairs. The bank authorities were friendly because they realised the quixotic nature of the transaction which had incurred his large indebtedness to the institution. Through their forbearance and on the payment of a certain amount payable in monthly instalments, I managed to free him from the liability to the bank. The relief from his improvident purchase from his father's estate necessitated more difficult negotiations, and some sacrifice on the part of his wife, who had acquired his late brother's interest in the estate, having been financed by a friend.



## THE LAW

Nothing would induce him to relinquish his political life, and when he entered the Federal arena in 1901 and became Minister of Customs, I felt that it would really have paid him better to attend to his professional work. I persuaded him to come to the office on a visit to Adelaide, and we had a heart-to-heart chat. I pointed out that the fees I drew would be materially increased if he would attend as a Queen's Counsel to the various briefs, many of which were from our own office, and some coming from outside professional men. We had several heavy civil cases in progress, and I pointed out to him that if he would give two or three years to the practice, he would not only be free of all liability, but have a much greater income than he could possibly derive from his political emoluments and his share of the practice. He sat firmly in his seat, listened to all I had to say, asked a question here and there, looked at me squarely in the face, and said: "No, I can't, Mac. The damn thing is like dram drinking. Once you get into it, you cannot let go."

I saw it was useless to persevere further with him. He was wedded to the political life. He had been so long in it, first as a Premier of South Australia, and secondly as a Commonwealth Minister, that the life held such an attraction for him that he would be absolutely uncomfortable in the more peaceful and less exciting surroundings of the Bar.

So on we went. The practice continued to increase. The Bar work was considerable, the company work was never greater. The Kalgoorlie mines were largely exploited by South Australian money. Companies were formed very rapidly, and some were liquidated with almost equal rapidity. It was all grist for the legal mill. One civil action I remember which lasted 63 days, and gave Mr. Justice Gordon his baptism of fire, almost persuaded Kingston to accept a brief. Our clients were anxious he should do so, but the call of politics was again too great.

Sir Josiah Symon led me in this case. We won. The



costs were enormous. The amount involved was immense, but I remember well my terrible anxiety in this action. The case was fought on an opinion I gave that we would win on the main issue, and lose on a very minor matter involving a few hundred pounds. I based my opinion on the law, and not upon the facts. A very heavy Bar was engaged, and Sir Josiah Symon had never expressed a decided opinion. It was the judge's first heavy civil case since his appointment, and Sir John Downer, who was leading for our opponents, was a subtle and forceful opponent. One can judge my relief when the judge's decision was almost in terms of my opinion.

Notwithstanding the anxiety of the litigant, his tearful approach to me at the commencement, his urge to do everything possible, and to spare no expense, I regret to say that, after he paid his bill of costs, which was an enormous one, I never saw him again across the threshold of my office.

Kingston had many enemies in the political world, but had many friends. He and a prominent member of the Opposition while he was in State politics engaged in the gentle occupation of backing each other's bills. His opponent was an inveterate share gambler, and occasionally got in a tight corner. There was a lot of loose paper flying about between these two. It was gradually all taken up, and Kingston gave me a solemn promise that he would never back another bill, or ask anyone else outside the firm for financial aid.

While a number of them almost detested the man politically, they had a soft spot in their hearts for his integrity, courage, and capacity. His vituperative power, while he was not a good speaker, was most marked. Dealing with an opponent once who was chairman of a royal commission, and who had given a report with which he disagreed, he proceeded to denounce him politically, recapitulating his political sins from his youth upwards, and winding up by saying: "And now to the accumulated vices of a lifetime he has added the crowning ignominy of an unjust judge!"



## THE LAW

Prior to my joining him he had been associated with a syndicate of influential men in the mining world at Broken Hill. They made considerable sums, and had ventured considerable sums, some of which had been lost. Some difference of opinion arose, and Kingston retired from the syndicate, and disposed of all his interest. Had he continued he would have probably been a rich man.

Mining interested him tremendously, and we formed a little syndicate in Adelaide to which the firm made a monthly contribution and had prospectors examining silver, lead, copper and other shows in the far north. The prospectors in those days were a good type. They did not look for the mines in the front bar or the bar parlour, but really went out prospecting the country, and reporting periodically to the secretary. The syndicate had an interest in Arltunga, and I, on behalf of Kingston and myself, had secured a mineral lease there which was well reported upon. One or two others were interested, but the firm held the control. The mineral lease was taken over by a company in which Kingston and myself held the predominating interest. He came to Adelaide one Saturday morning, and I managed to get him into the office, where I proposed that, as the shares were at a very high premium, we should dispose of at least half our interest.

I urged him to sell half or three-quarters of his interests, and impressed upon him the fact that a realisation would clear him of all outside liabilities, so handsome was the profit. No doubt the call of other years, when he was associated with much larger interests than those involved in the transaction to which I refer made him pause, and he suddenly said: "I'll see John about this. His brother Alec has a great knowledge of the mineral potentialities in this district." I did not know who "John" was. He informed me it was Sir John Forrest—afterwards Lord Forrest—with whom he had struck up a great friendship. He returned to Melbourne that night.



The shares still boomed, and I am glad to say I took advantage of the situation as regards the greater portion of those I held. Back came an urgent telegram from Kingston: "Do not sell," to be followed by a letter in his own hand explaining that John and his brother had a very high opinion of the field.

I held Kingston's shares, and instead of making some thousands out of them, they were ultimately sold, I think, for under £1,500. He had missed his chance of getting out of his difficulties, but his position was then such that I felt it was within our grasp to liquidate his liabilities within a short space of time.

The worry and anxiety of supporting his position for a period of over four years was considerable, and, although it may have given me a grey hair or two, I felt that it was the right thing, not only from my point of view, to preserve the good name of the senior partner, but his integrity and capacity were such that I felt it would have been a loss to the community were he involved in bankruptcy proceedings.

On his first visit to Europe I determined to accumulate to his credit as much cash as was possible. He was the guest of the Government, and made no call upon me during his stay abroad, but judge of my amazement on his arrival in Sydney when I got a telegram, "Densior £500." This was one of a series of code words arranged between us prior to his departure.

He was defeated in the House of Assembly by a narrow margin of votes, and his Government resigned. The Labour men had voted against him, and were in sufficient numbers just to turn the scale. He described their action as "the basest act of ingratitude that ever disgraced a body of public men."

The Government that displaced him lasted but a short time, and a further Government was formed in which he declined a portfolio. The election was approaching, and I take it with the idea of pulling the old lion down, there were



## THE LAW

three candidates in the field, two in addition to himself, and there were only two seats. The people rallied to Kingston, and he was returned. A somewhat amusing bit of verse, written by Mr. Noel Webb—afterwards Mr. Justice Webb—was used in the election campaign: I still remember the first paragraph—

“Men of the west, blench not, hold fast,  
Women, your votes are free,  
In the bright light hold up his past.”

This gave rise to some hilarity, as Kingston's gallantries were notorious.

He stood for the Legislative Council on one occasion, and I conducted the campaign for him in his absence, but as it was in the south-east of South Australia, both the old members were returned.

On his return from abroad, however, he accepted a seat in the Council which he retained until the advent of federation. His heart was entirely in politics, and he advocated federation with enormous zest. He presided at the convention deliberations in Adelaide with great credit to himself, and with encomiums from all the members of the convention.

On federation becoming an accomplished fact, he was returned for the district of Adelaide, and much of his time was spent in Melbourne, where he had taken the Customs portfolio under Sir Edmund Barton. The impress of his work is visible even to-day in the Customs Act which he passed through Parliament. He took with him from Adelaide into the Federal service Mr. Gordon Castles, with whom he had many years of association as State Attorney-General. Castles knew the Kingstonian method, and he gave effect to it.

Kingston devoted his entire time to his duties as a Commonwealth Minister. The affairs with his father's estate had



been settled, the Bank had been cleared, and from 1901 onwards one could say he was a solvent man. His settlement with his father's estate necessitated the relinquishment of the old home on West Terrace, and his residence at another property owned by his parent at Marino. I think the fact that his wife was able to secure Marino soothed his feelings at giving up the old West Terrace home.

There still stand in the neighbourhood of Marino two Norfolk Island pines known as "Charlie" and "Pat." They stand right on the sea coast, and are to-day conspicuous landmarks along the sea shore. They were planted by his brother and himself when they were children.

Some amusing incidents fly to one's mind as having happened during the eight years I spent in partnership with this remarkable man. One of his dogs was a source of expense to him. He appeared to have a penchant for postmen and their trousers, and every few weeks there would be a demand from some postman, and sometimes by others, for reparations for the damage done to their clothing by the redoubtable "Jock," as he was called. I am sure that it cost Kingston a considerable sum, but such was his affection for Jock that nothing would induce him to send him away, and one hesitated to suggest he should destroy him, having regard to the place Jock occupied in his esteem.

Kingston's constituents from the west end had been in the habit of lining themselves up in the outer office on seats provided for clients, waiting to see if he would arrive so that they could touch him for a few shillings, as times were pretty bad. I designed a scheme of presenting them with meal tickets, and afterwards bed tickets in the Salvation Army home. The accountant kept a stock of these, and as Kingston rarely came to the office, the numbers dwindled. Then suddenly there was an increase, and our food and bed tickets became in great demand. The accountant suspected something queer, and we accordingly arranged to have one or two of them watched, and we found that they were disposing



## THE LAW

of these tickets for cash, and gravitating to the nearest hotel to spend the price in liquor. Stricter measures were taken, and finally the waiting regiment disappeared from the city office.

I have always regarded my association with this great mind as of value to me. Apart from the fact that his personality appealed to me, he had a magnificent judgment on legal points, and, although he never appeared to open a legal book, the principles that had been instilled into him in his younger days served him well. I recollect on one occasion a certain bank, through its own solicitors, had sought for his opinion. It was an intricate question involving the sale of some thousands of head of cattle, and naturally, Kingston had no time to delve into the law. Our managing clerk and myself did our best for him, and I drafted an opinion for submission to Kingston, which was adverse to the bank's claim. He said: "That sounds very nice, Mac, but is not there so-and-so and so-and-so?" We saw his point, went into the thing again, and searched in vain for authority, until my assistant happened on a case in the House of Lords, where the very point had been taken and argued under very different circumstances. But it was enough, and we built a fresh opinion around it. This he ultimately signed, and I was told afterwards by the bank's solicitors that it resulted in their being able to secure a settlement of the dispute on terms favourable to the bank.

My late wife and I frequently dined with the Kingstons *en famille*. He carried on as if he had not a care in the world. His wife had a pet monkey which was allowed to come to the dining-room on the conclusion of dinner, when the nuts and dessert were brought forward. The monkey's name was "Wandi." She sat on Mrs. Kingston's shoulder, and when she saw something really attractive, proceeded along the dining table. My wife was terrified of her, and, after the first meeting, we did not encounter her again. The monkey became very ill. Kingston and his wife were in London. I coined a code word, as we got our code messages through very cheaply, and at the end of the cable which I



had sent him I made one word "Wandiwell." This tickled him immensely.

To indicate the manner of man with whom I was associated, his force of character, and his devotion, I would mention an incident that occurred at the burial of his brother Strick, or "Pat," as he was usually known.

The body had been taken to the family vault in West Terrace, and, in company, with his colleagues in the government of the day, I attended the burial. On our return to Kingston's house we were taking leave of him when he asked me to send my carriage back. He never informed me of the purpose for which he required it. I sent it, however, and afterwards ascertained that he had used it to take the cleric who had performed the burial ceremony back to the scene. The service was that of the Church of England, and as his brother was a suicide there is some portion of the service that it is not usual to read under such circumstances. This apparently had not escaped Kingston's attention, over-wrought and all as he was, and he desired the cleric, who knew his brother well, to go back to the graveside and read the omitted part over the grave. This was done, but I could not help, when I had heard of it, feeling the strong sentiment in this man's make-up.

I had occasion once, at his request, to go through his private letterbook, in which pressed copies of his correspondence were kept. I was struck with one letter I saw addressed to Commander Creswell of "The Protector," the one and only naval vessel in the defence make-up of South Australia at the time. I have not forgotten the terms of that letter. It was written at the time of a threatened revolt by the waterside workers at Port Adelaide. Riots were feared, and were to be staged, I think, on a Monday morning. The letter addressed to Commander Creswell ran: "Train the guns of 'The Protector' on St. Vincent Street, Port Adelaide, at 9 a.m. on (I think it said) Monday next. The responsibility for this action is mine." His signature followed. His political existence depended largely on the radical vote, but he



## THE LAW

did his duty as he saw it by the community in ordering such a step. Here was courage of the first order—an evidence of great devotion to the public interest.

Kingston was a great walker. He and his wife frequently invited myself and wife to accompany them to some country centre, where we were regaled at an arranged luncheon at the nearest hotel. Clarendon was a favourite haunt, and the inner man was always well catered for. After luncheon he and I sallied forth on a walk of a few miles, interspersed by lengthy quotations of English and Australian verse. Kipling, Walter Scott, and now and again Tennyson, Kendall and many other Australian writers he would quote, and invite my opinion. I held my own in English verse, but, apart from Gordon and Kendall, I was not so well versed in Australian literature.

On one occasion, after we had been discussing "Ulysses," one of Tennyson's masterpieces, I told him I could repeat the whole of "The Lady of the Lake." He challenged me to do so, and had to implore me to stop. As a matter of fact, this was a piece of English verse prescribed for examination in one year of my Arts course, and it so intrigued me that I had committed the whole thing to memory, and slabs of it still stick. We would drive back to the city; he would drop me at my home and pass on to West Terrace, where he would probably spend the evening amongst official files.

I only had one real difference of opinion with Kingston during my whole association with him, and this arose from his determination, and the determination of the Australian delegates, to insist on the retention of Clause 74 in the Constitution. He had been very wroth at the intrusion of the Chief Justice, Sir Samuel Way, and some other notable Australians into the discussions that were taking place in London. Both Sir Samuel Way and Sir Samuel Griffith were strongly opposed to limiting the right of appeal to the Privy Council, and I felt that they were right. I felt that even on the interpretation of the Constitution, it was better to have the views of a tribunal who were not susceptible to



any local colouring, and whose views on a written document were not likely to be coloured or prejudiced in any way, but were likely to be received by the general public as an unprejudiced and impartial judgment. Notwithstanding the limited fashion in which Clause 74 was ultimately passed, therefore, I should have preferred its entire elimination. The delegates had been offered an Imperial Court of Appeal to avert the delays that took place in a hearing before the Privy Council.

I still think, although Kingston entirely disagreed, that my view was right, and that Australia would probably have been better served if the Privy Council were the final arbiter of constitutional matters, and I find a great deal of support for the attitude I then took when I peruse the judgment in the Dried Fruits case, known as the James Case.

Distinguished and all as the occupants of the High Court Bench have been for talent and for learning, for years they apparently bent their efforts towards making the Constitution work in the way political parties desired, rather than interpreting a written document.

He who reads Section 92, be he layman or be he even schoolboy, would not hesitate as to its meaning, and yet subtle efforts from time to time whittled away the real effect of this section, and the Privy Council, when finally faced with the Dried Fruits Case, wisely gave leave to appeal in order that a tangle, which the High Court itself had created by various decisions from time to time, might be unravelled. It was unravelled, and with a clarity that leaves one satisfied that neither political exigency nor any other consideration can detract from the express words of the Constitution accepted by the people.

Kingston wrote me very strongly concerning the attitude of the Chief Justice of our own State, who had apparently circulated a memorandum amongst the responsible persons overseas against the clause that originally stood in the Constitution. I think that probably, but for this happening, Way might have been first Chief Justice of Australia. Notwith-



## THE LAW

standing Kingston's wrath, Sir Samuel Way remained his friend, and was always interested in his welfare, as I have explained elsewhere. Sir Samuel's desire was to have available an appellate tribunal freed from all suggestion of local bias, and in this I think he was right.

There are many attractive points of view, and many practical reasons can be adduced, for a modification of Section 92, but there it stands, probably the pillar around which the Commonwealth was created, and the Constitution accepted.

Kingston introduced me from time to time to various political friends, and he frequently gave a private luncheon at Parliament House to those whom he esteemed. He had a great liking for Seddon from New Zealand, whose politics in many respects ran parallel with his own. I was his guest on one occasion to meet this remarkable man, and I could not help commenting on the strong resemblance of their characters. They had a long discussion during and after lunch on industrial arbitration, which Kingston pioneered in Australia, as Seddon had done in New Zealand.

While he was still in financial difficulties he asked me one day to a private luncheon to meet his pal "Hannah," as he called him. By way of parenthesis, I may say that Kingston had a pet name for all his friends and colleagues. "Hannah" was then Mr. J. H. Gordon—afterwards Sir John Gordon and Judge of the Supreme Court in South Australia. He himself was oftentimes in some financial difficulty, and when the luncheon was over I could not resist remarking to the pair of them how carefree they appeared to be, notwithstanding all their worries. At this they burst into well-sustained laughter, but left me with the firm impression that underneath all their good luncheon stories and their general urbanity, there lurked a certain amount of worry.

Through Kingston I met the first Prime Minister of Australia—Australia's noblest son—Sir Edmund Barton. He was a most striking personality, and a man of extraordinarily brilliant parts. His speeches, delivered calmly but fluently,



were full of meat. His presence seemed to impress the crowds that gathered to hear him.

Kingston resigned from the Barton administration on some matter of principle, and sat for a while as a private member until he was stricken down, immediately granted leave, and returned to Adelaide.

Circumstances arose which made it essential in the interests of the business, that our partnership should be dissolved, and, after eight years of strenuous work, a dissolution was agreed to and arranged on the most pleasant terms. We sent a joint circular to clients, and he retained an English association which was worth some £1,500 a year. He kept the accountant of the old firm, and moved into smaller chambers which he visited occasionally.

Our separation was a matter of regret to him, and I am well aware it was a matter of deep regret to me, but the circumstances were such that it was really better that it should be so.

After the dissolution I had joined forces with our erstwhile managing-clerk, one W. J. Vandenberg, who had been trained under his father in a London solicitor's office, and had a wonderful knowledge of practice. The whole of the Kingston-McLachlan clientele, with the exception of the English business which was retained by Mr. Kingston, gradually followed me in my new partnership, and the whole of the staff, with the exception of the accountant, whose presence with Kingston was absolutely essential, came in to my new firm's employ. Kingston died in 1908.

We had many country solicitors for whom we acted as town agents, and some of their business was indeed profitable. Then Mr. Vandenberg's health broke, and I joined forces with one who was destined to go far in the profession—Mr. J. M. Napier. The firm was doing well, and Dr. T. J. Browne subsequently joined it.

The 1914-18 war years set back legal work considerably. Mr. Napier joined the firm of Glynn, Parsons; and Dr. Browne joined up with Sir Josiah Symon's firm, and for a



## THE LAW

few months I carried the burden alone until Mr. Reed, now Mr. Justice Reed, joined me, and we subsequently took into partnership Mr. T. L. Griffiths.

Such was the set-up till 1925, when I determined to go abroad, and give my wife a holiday.

Looking back over it all, I kept myself pretty well occupied. I was Chief of the Caledonian Society from 1899 to 1902. In that capacity I stimulated the effort to erect a monument to McDouall Stuart, which stands in Victoria Square to-day. I founded the "Bairns' Dance Class" for Scottish dancing. I was the commanding officer of a Scottish Company formed at the time of the Boer War, our chief idea being to go out to South Africa to fight the Boers. We were adorned by the uniform of the Gordon Highlanders, a thing which appears to me to-day to be a gross piece of impertinence.

The unveiling of the McDouall Stuart statue was done under somewhat peculiar circumstances. The money had been provided by all and sundry, including very substantial contributions from wealthy Scots, and the Council of the Caledonian Society were really the committee sponsoring and supervising the effort. Governor Le Hunt, who was Governor of South Australia at the time, had come from one of the colonies, and the request of the committee to him to unveil the statue was replied to probably by some aide-de-camp in a manner which aroused the ire of the Council, of which I was Chief. I had no desire to unveil the Statue. The movement had been started long before my day as Chief, and I waited upon Mr. Barr-Smith, who was one of our most influential Scots, but who disliked any publicity, or any public appearance. He suggested to me, however, that I should approach the Lieutenant-Governor. This was Sir Samuel Way. I did so, explained the whole circumstances frankly to him, and the difficulty I was in, and he promptly replied: "Why not unveil it yourself?" I was at my wits' end. The Council insisted that I should unveil the statue, and I justified myself in a somewhat intemperate



speech in which, incidentally, I touched upon the absence of his Excellency.

Looking back on it, I do not think it was in the best of taste, but the tenor of the aide's reply to our request to him to unveil it was such that my somewhat Highland wrath was to an extent unleashed.

My name appears in copper at the base as having unveiled it, and a very loyal City Council discussed the legality of allowing it to remain there, their object being, I take it, to show their disapproval of what I had said at the unveiling ceremony. A friend of mine who happened to be at the meeting so alluded to the position in which my name appears as to cause the assembled fathers to dissolve in mirth, and so it passed over.

During my term as Chief of the Caledonian Society, Sir Hector Macdonald visited Australia, and I had the privilege of entertaining him and a number of prominent South Australian Scotchmen during his stay. He was a man who had risen from the ranks, but he had great clarity of vision and great alertness. He dined with me privately in my own home, and I felt greatly shocked when, shortly afterwards, I heard of his disastrous end.

While he was in Adelaide, Wilson Barrett was there, and I remember full well some lines from that gentleman's pen on Macdonald's death in Paris. They run—

“I’ve looked in your fearless een, Mac,  
And felt the grup of your hand,  
When our hearts were both aching for home, Mac,  
Awa’ in a distant land.  
I canna believe their lees, Mac,  
You were aye a mon among men,  
And I’d sooner be damned with you, Mac,  
Than blessed with some that I ken.”

His was an untimely end. He was a fighting man, and I



## THE LAW

remember his telling me in my own home that if the authorities would let him take his Gurkhas to Africa, the war would be over in a few months. Britain had set her face against the use of coloured troops against the Boers, and while what he said may have been perfectly true, still the future of South Africa may not have exhibited that friendliness to the British Commonwealth of Nations that obtains to-day.

I also entertained the great Scottish singer, Jessie McLachlan. The lady claimed kinship, and as she was a buxom woman and insisted on embracing me most heartily on arrival, I felt somewhat embarrassed. She was a great success in Adelaide. At the request of Sir Samuel Way, who had himself married a Scotch lady who was of the Gordon clan, she sang "Rule Britannia" one night in the Adelaide Town Hall. Way became quite emotional, stood up in front of the whole audience waving his programme aloft, and cheered and clapped until the lady returned again. She sang her Scotch songs in a way that appealed to the people.

In another capacity, I met Sir George Reid of "Yes-No" fame, the wittiest platform orator I have ever listened to. Later I met the silver-tongued Deakin, whose glorious eloquence seemed to electrify his audience. He rose in oratory to heights probably unequalled by any Australian public man. He was extremely quick on the up-take, and I remember on one occasion when he was in the Adelaide Town Hall opposing some referendum proposal, I was seated on the platform near him. At the conclusion of a wonderful oratorical effort on his part, I whispered under my breath, "Home rule for the States." He caught the whisper, and, with that alacrity which characterised him, raised the question to heights that carried the audience right off their feet. His quickness absolutely astounded me. He apparently worked a brain of tremendous subtlety and analytical power to a standstill in what he believed to be the interests of his country.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

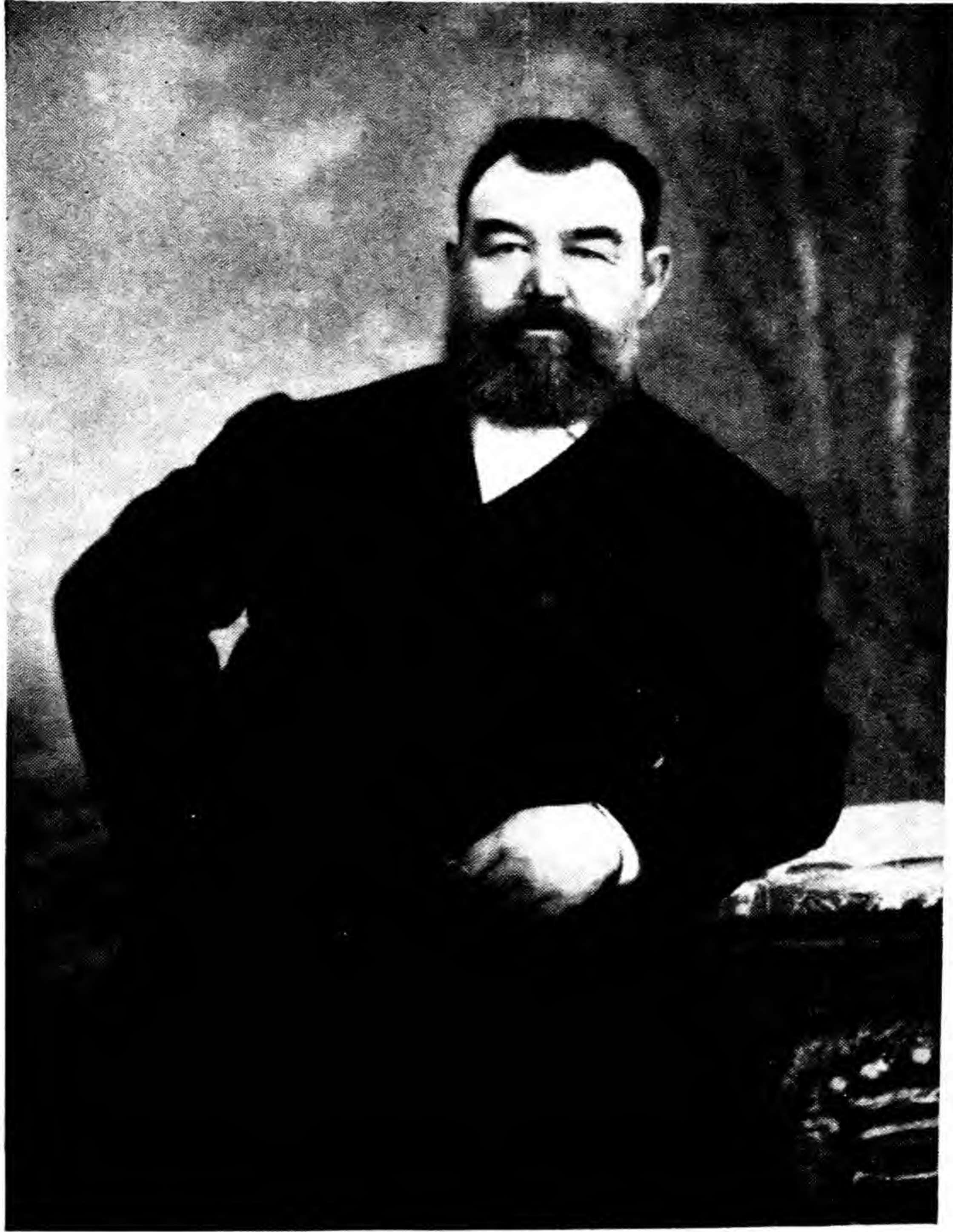
The Right Honorable W. A. Watt, who was a close friend and ardent admirer of Deakin, was the most marvellous platform speaker. He was clear, he was incisive. He knew where he stood, and his eloquence, while not so lofty as that of Deakin, was of a very practical and telling character.





*Author's Mother.*





*Author's Father.*



## BENCH AND BAR

I CAME into the law in 1890 as an articled Clerk. Three bearded judges—Way, Boucaut, and Bunday—occupied the Supreme Court Bench. I remember well the presence of Judge Bunday at the circuit court at Mount Gambier. It was the first occasion that I had ever seen the Supreme Court in action, and as one of my principals was engaged in a case, I had to attend him at the court. Judge Bunday was a person of great dignity, and his associate, with the clearly chiselled features of a Greek god, greatly impressed me. I did not know who he was, but I remember thinking I had never seen a face with the features so clearly and well defined. His name was Cleland, and little did I think that in after years we would have many battles with each other, or that he was one destined for the Supreme Court Bench himself.

While I was still in articles at Mount Gambier, Mr. Paris Nesbit fought against my firm in a heavy legal court action tried at Millicent. We suffered a disastrous defeat after a three days' trial. A personal friend of mine created rather a sensation. He had been summoned as a witness, and as time dragged on, his eyes had apparently looked too often on the wine when it was red. He entered the court, hat in hand, and while Mr. Nesbit was cross-examining a witness, persisted in roaring out: "Ask him if he is a married man!" He was promptly brought before the Bench, where the dignified S.M., Mr. J. P. Stow, presided, and fined £10. As he was being escorted out, he struggled with the policeman to get his hand into his pocket to produce the £10, saying that the magistrate might make it more if he did not pay.

The South Australian Bench remained unaltered for many years, and the Chief Justice of the State, Sir Samuel Way, was probably one of the finest jurists that Australia has ever



produced, notwithstanding the fact—that I shall later refer to—that I had been very critical of a sentence he had pronounced in a criminal case. His summing up in that case had exposed him to considerable criticism in Parliament and out of it—a criticism which I may have to some extent fanned, because I believed in the innocence of the man who was sentenced, and felt quite satisfied that he had not been guilty of the crime with which he was charged. Notwithstanding the fact that the Chief must have known that I influenced the appointment of a commission to examine the case, I never felt the slightest prejudice obtrude itself in his treatment of me. I think there lurked at the back of his mind, however, a feeling that he may have erred, because I remember, on one occasion, as I drove with him and another counsel to a view in the locality where the prisoner was supposed to have been identified, he was at pains to point out to me the exact location, and how confident the witness could be from the angle. His anxiety to impress this upon me years after the event made me feel that he had some qualms concerning the matter.

Broad in his outlook, with a tremendous grasp of the common law, master of his art, he always appeared to me to possess a mind that towered above all others either on the Bench or at the Bar. He had his weaknesses. I have seen him thoroughly enjoying himself at a tea meeting amongst a whole body of Methodists, but whatever these smaller idiosyncrasies indicated, he left on those who appeared before him the indelible impression of an extraordinarily talented individual.

My partner Kingston had been articled to him, and he had a great regard for Kingston as a man, and, while he was opposed in private to much of the Kingstonian policy, he was anxious that Kingston should make good in the wider Australian sphere which was then opening up.

He called me back into his chambers one morning, and asked me how Kingston's affairs were progressing, having heard in some quarter that I was interesting myself. I



explained to him that the one difficulty that remained was securing Mrs. Kingston's consent to the acceptance of the Marino property for the interest she had acquired in his father's estate. I explained to him that if this were done, Kingston's solvency was in sight, and as he was not incurring any fresh liabilities, his future was assured. He was anxious for further details, and invited me to go to his North Adelaide residence that evening, and explain the entire position to him. This I did, whereupon he said that he had spoken to Mrs. Kingston's solicitor, who had strongly advised her to accept the arrangement, and that the solicitor was only too willing that the Chief Justice should approach her with a view of securing her signature. He promptly rang up Mrs. Kingston, and made an appointment for the following morning at the conclusion of the chamber business.

As arranged, I met him with a carriage, and accompanied by his Pomeranian pet, "Frills," we set out for West Terrace. Waiting for Mrs. Kingston in the well-equipped lounge, Frills still adhered to his master's heels. Mrs. Kingston made her entry, followed by a Scotch terrier. Before the customary greetings could be exchanged, Frills and Cupi, as the Scotch terrier was called, were at each other's throats. As neither the Chief Justice nor Mrs. Kingston was of the figure that permitted seizing small dogs, it was left to me to seize one, but before I was able to secure him they had shattered to pieces on the floor a magnificent Austrian vase. Mrs. Kingston took her terrier away, the Chief remarking to me: "It is a bad beginning." He regarded the smashing of this valuable vase as something that would upset Mrs. Kingston.

She returned, but, notwithstanding all his blandishments and his pressure—and he had an extraordinary method of impressing himself upon one—she absolutely declined to sign the document. His activities, however, bore fruit, for a few days afterwards her solicitor communicated with me that she had signed, and was prepared to carry out the arrangement. The Chief, when I took the liberty of informing him of the fact, was quite delighted, and said: "I had an idea she would,



notwithstanding her refusal. Frills' behaviour contributed nothing to our success." The Chief could not conceal his pleasure that the matter had been finalised.

On my dissolution with Kingston he sent for me to his chambers, and asked for some details as to how Kingston stood, and how his future was to be provided for, and when he had heard that everything had been amicably arranged, and Kingston's future assured, he expressed considerable satisfaction. He pioneered the movement, after Kingston's death, to have a statue erected in Victoria Square, and insisted that Kingston should appear attired in the uniform of a Privy Counsellor. The statue overlooks West Adelaide, the State seat that Kingston had held for so many years.

Way was not only a great lawyer, he was also a practical law reformer. The introduction by him of the procedure known in South Australia as "the Summons for Immediate Relief" was a necessary and well thought out reform. In the realm of promissory notes and bills of exchange there was ample machinery for speedy judgments, and upon these he modelled his Summons for Immediate Relief, which was an extraordinarily useful procedure for legitimate claimants whose rights were being withheld by spurious defences in order to gain time.

Most of his colleagues exercised their powers under this rule with great reluctance, but it has grown in favour, and will continue to grow, because the machinery of the law has to be quickened up, and this method of dealing, as it were, summarily with the rights of parties can do nothing but work to the advantage not only of the community but also of the profession, because there is nothing the client likes better than to have his affairs speedily dealt with.

The three judges of my earlier years have all been gathered to their fathers, but Way's influence is to be found in his masterly judgments and the impress that he made upon the counsel that appeared before him.

Judge Boucaut had a very keen and a highly technical mind. He was sometimes abrupt. He gave the prisoners a



great opportunity to avail themselves of every technical device in their favour, but once found guilty they had cause to remember.

The impetuosity which sometimes characterised Justice Boucaut was induced I think to some extent by pains which latterly he suffered in his extremities. I remember on one occasion appearing before him on a summons which I had taken out on behalf of a client under the Guardianship of Infants Act. Several other counsel were engaged in the case, and when the summons was read by the judge, he informed me that it was nonsense, would not listen to my arguments, although I had Appeal Court authority for the step I was proposing, but almost threw the summons at me, said he would make no order, and we all retired in a state of disorder. He had not heard any argument, and while going downstairs one of the other counsel asked me what I proposed to do. I said I would move the Full Court.

Just before the luncheon hour I received a message from his associate to know if I would see the judge in his chambers at 2 o'clock, and was informed that the other counsel were being invited to be present. We assembled, the whole matter was argued before him, and he finally made the order which I desired, made no remark and abruptly bade us "Good afternoon." I had observed that while present in the morning he had one of his feet in a drawer of his desk. Apparently he had been suffering, and the pain had induced the state of mind and irritation that made him behave as he did.

Judge Bunday was a very human and dignified judge. His health was indifferent, and he did not like any turmoil, either in court or in his chambers. On one occasion, Mr. Cleland and myself got into a very vigorous argument before him in chambers, and, as we exhibited rather more than usual vigor verging on abuse, the unfortunate judge was so overcome that he collapsed. His associate came to his assistance, we very shame-facedly retired, and Cleland promptly said, "You did that, Mac." I rejoined that it was his fault. We were sent for the next morning, and both



expected rebukes from the judge, instead of which we received an apology for his own behaviour, and the matter was proceeded with. It was an Admiralty matter, and as he was a pretty good authority on Admiralty law, he gave us a quick decision. No mention of what one could almost describe as a lingual fracas was ever made.

Mr. Justice Boucaut and Mr. Justice Bunday made way for other men. Sir John Gordon became a judge. He was a delightful speaker. He turned a very neat phrase on the occasion when he was congratulated by the Bar. He said: "I hope there'll be no moaning at the bar when I put out to sea."

It was Mr. Justice Gordon's misfortune to have to try one of the heaviest civil actions that up to that time had been listed in the Supreme Court. I have already referred to it, and my anxieties in connection with it.

Mr. Justice Homberg had a practical mind. I remember on one occasion he asked me to remain in his chambers as he wished to see me. I had been more successful in a jury case before him a few days before than I had any reason to hope, and His Honour said to me: "You got a bigger verdict in that case than you should have got." I said it was all to the good. He laughed, and said: "I summed up pretty much in your favour, and judge my astonishment when the jury awarded you £100 more than under my direction they should have given." I made some remark concerning the jury system in civil cases, and how unsatisfactory it often proved. Out of his desk he produced a blotting pad which he told me his associate, or the usher of the Court had brought to him, showing how the amount of the verdict had been arrived at, and at the end of the calculation the words "Fine £100" were added. He said: "I could not refrain from showing you this. They evidently determined that not only should the unfortunate defendant pay all he owed, but he should be fined £100 for some reason undisclosed." He was very amused, but nothing could be done about it.

The Master of the Court when I came into the profession



## BENCH AND BAR

was Alexander Buchanan, alert, competent and capable. He had been a partner of the Honorable Charles Mann, a brilliant lawyer of before my day. He suffered a slight impediment in speech, and it was greatly to his credit and betrayed his force of character that he practically eliminated this failing, and was able to sum up to a jury without any perceptible hesitation.

Sir John Gordon, Mr. Justice Homberg, and Mr. Justice Buchanan have passed on. Sir Samuel Way, to the great regret of the South Australian Bar, and to the loss of South Australia, died in 1916.

Way's successor was Sir George Murray. He, too, has passed away. Sir Angus Parsons, Sir Frederick Richards, and Sir Mellis Napier were appointed to the Bench.



## PROFESSIONAL LIFE

COMING to the city, I felt my way cautiously. I was thrown into the midst of a very considerable practice, including the liquidation of one large financial institution. Owing to the death of my predecessor, the work was somewhat in arrears, and, being in the main accustomed to a country practice, I had to familiarise myself with the somewhat voluminous rules of court and the practice of the court. I had an excellent mentor and quickly accustomed myself to the conduct of chamber business.

My desire was to endeavour to extend the commercial side, and in this I achieved some success. "Great oaks from little acorns grow," and I remember full well how I secured the business of one who remained a constant and valuable client until his death. It was really a trivial matter.

A young girl had suffered what might have proved to be a serious injury in crossing from the platform at a railway station. The crossing was unlit, and points occurred for switching the railway carriages from the main line. She was unfortunate enough to get her foot entangled and to fall heavily, sustaining what might have been a very serious injury. A young solicitor had issued a summons under the Local Courts Act against the Railway Commissioner for damages, and apparently had become afraid to proceed with the action with the full machinery of the Crown Solicitor's office arrayed against him. A young estate agent, having retrieved the papers, brought the girl to consult me. I undertook the case for a low fee which he guaranteed, viewed the locus in quo, and found that the Railway Commissioner was proceeding to instal some lights. The case came for trial. I asked for a view, which was stoutly resisted by the Crown. Having viewed the crossing and the



## PROFESSIONAL LIFE

installation of the new lights the Bench awarded me the full amount of the claim, the presiding magistrate intimating that if a much larger sum had been claimed, there was ample evidence to justify a larger verdict. Although I did not know it at the time, the small estate agent was financed by one who controlled several large estates, and he afterwards turned out to be one of my most profitable as well as one of my most constant clients.

The liquidation of the Mount Gambier Building Society, and my success in getting priority as creditors for a body of persons whose shares had matured, brought me in touch with a number of persons from the south-east, where my earlier years had been spent in articles. An old schoolfellow had commenced practice at Mount Gambier, and we became his town agents. I had some failures, but I had great successes. How success in those days exhilarated one, and how failure for a time depressed!

A huge action to which I have made reference in another connection occupied a tremendous amount of one's time. "From 1901 onwards, I led in many important cases. I fought the Commissioner of Taxes successfully on more than one occasion. I was consulted by the manager of a well-known refrigeration company, whose principal I had never met. I had acted in many small matters on the company's behalf. In 1901, they were threatened with an action from the negligent cold storage of eggs by a Melbourne firm. The principal of the company arrived on the scene, and I was fortunate enough to secure his confidence. Murray—afterwards Sir George, Chief Justice—led for the Melbourne company, instructed by a local firm. The result was an overwhelming victory for my client, and I remember well some observations of Sir James Boucaut from the Bench regarding expert witnesses. He remarked: "There are three grades of liars—liars, damn liars, and experts."

My client, who had vast interests in Scotland, in America, in South Africa, New Zealand and Australia, was, of course, gratified at the result. He was an extraordinary man. He



understood cold storage as few men did at that time. He was the possessor of a marvellous library of Scotch literature stored in Edinburgh. His health was indifferent; he lived on white foods and fish, always boiled, and soda and milk was his strongest beverage. Notwithstanding his condition, he travelled extensively looking after his great interests, and entrusting local conduct to various attorneys. He made a proposal that my wife and I should relinquish residence in Adelaide and accompany him to the various centres of his operations. I was to act as adviser, with all expenses paid, and with a remuneration which was far in excess of my then considerable income from my share in the partnership. He came out and dined with us in the hope that he would influence us to accept his offer. It was a somewhat alluring prospect, but, having carefully considered it, and although he wrote me offering to enter into the agreement for a period of years, I turned the offer down.

Shortly afterwards, I was invited by a well-established firm in Perth to join up with them to do their advocacy. The offer was not so advantageous from a financial point of view as the one to which I have just referred, but it was considerable. My wife and I determined, however, not to dislodge our roots as it were from amongst our friends and relatives, and I continued to carry on my practice in Adelaide.

I had many Crown briefs. Looking back on it all, I wonder how I found time to engage in other public activities.

In 1900 I was requested by the Attorney-General, in association with Mr. E. W. Benham, to re-edit "The Magistrates' Guide," which we did, working in the evenings at my private home.

A case which I have already mentioned, that of one Flynn, was a criminal defence embarked upon after Kingston had ceased to be Attorney-General. Flynn and another named Lawson were charged with robbery under arms. The circumstances were these. Mr. T. J. Greenway, Manager of Block 14 Smelters, with an assistant named Winter, was



## PROFESSIONAL LIFE

taking some £1200 from a Port Adelaide bank to pay the men's wages at the works. While on the way, two masked and mounted men approached them at a quiet spot, shot the pony dead, seized the booty and made off with it, and rode desperately for some miles. Neither Mr. Greenway nor his assistant was prepared to swear very definitely to their identity, but the horsemen, travelling at a great pace, were seen at some distance by various persons along a route they took right behind Henley Beach, to cross the Henley Beach road, and head towards Glenelg.

Lawson and Flynn were arrested, and were both examined by a surgeon. Lawson, though a spare and hard-fleshed muscular man, bore saddle marks right down his legs, proof of his violent ride, while Flynn, a fleshy though muscular type, bore no marks whatever. Flynn's friends in the west end made a collection and retained me to defend him. Mr. Paris Nesbit had been retained to defend Lawson. Way was the trial judge. The horses, it appeared, were stolen from the stock and station agent's paddock, and consisted of two thoroughbreds. The booty was never found. The case against Lawson was overwhelming. Notwithstanding the fact of the medical evidence, and that a policeman had seen Flynn in the west end at a time which rendered it impossible for him to be present in the neighbourhood of Port Adelaide or Henley Beach, the Crown secured a conviction.

Flynn, while in gaol, had seen fit, without my knowledge, to endeavour to improve his prospects by writing a letter to a friend, inviting his friend to testify as to his whereabouts on the day of the robbery. This letter was put in after the close of the whole of the evidence, and probably was the turning-point in the case as regards Flynn. The Chief Justice gave each of them twenty years, but stated a case as to whether the letter should have been allowed in evidence. The Chief's ruling was upheld by the Full Court. At the time of sentence, a dramatic scene occurred when Lawson named the other robber, and called himself a cur for not having told the court before. He lashed out violently at



a detective-inspector, and was with some difficulty overwhelmed.

Flynn did not have a good reputation, but I felt that justice had not been done. A mistake had been made. About Lawson's guilt there was no doubt, and I feared that the trial of the two men together prevented Flynn from getting that fair play which so characterises the administration of justice in our courts. So strong was the public outcry, which I certainly did not attempt to still, that a Royal Commission was appointed of three King's Counsel. The conduct of the Royal Commission was such that an eminent counsel of their own rank suggested to me, who had been briefed on Flynn's behalf, that I should throw my brief at them, and withdraw entirely from the proceedings. I ignored this somewhat prejudiced advice.

My friends expressed some annoyance to me at my persistence in advocating Flynn's innocence, and one man remarked: "Well, if he did not do it, Mac, he deserved the twenty years anyhow," an argument which was quite beside the point. I had occasion to see Lawson in reference to the evidence he could give before the Royal Commission, and had to attend the Stockade where he was imprisoned. I had ascertained his real name in the meantime, and on the warder leaving him alone with me to take his statement, I said to him: "Lawson, do you remember me?" He said: "Yes, you defended Flynn." I said: "Yes, but do you remember me as a small boy? Do you remember Charkutt Station?" He said: "I know you now, but I do not want to talk about the past, and please do not tell anyone you know who I am." His father I remember well. Several of his people occupied positions of trust and responsibility in South Australia. He apparently was the wild boy of the family.

Flynn was removed to the asylum and ultimately released under circumstances of which I know nothing. Lawson went to South Africa, where I learned he was shot in some escapade.



## PROFESSIONAL LIFE

The press had been kind to me. My political rampage in the south-east in '96 attracted the attention of a social weekly edited by the late Mr. H. C. Evans. He honoured me, at the conclusion of the campaign, by addressing one of his open letters, which I append below:—

### LETTERS TO PUBLIC MEN—ALEXANDER JOHN McLACHLAN, a Political Aspirant.

My dear Sir,—

You will observe that I have styled you a “political aspirant.” There is no hidden sarcasm in the phrase. The fact of the matter is I was bothered as to what I should call you. To have written “Alexander John McLachlan, lawyer,” might have met the case. It would have been strictly correct, but when you say the words to yourself they have a “bald and unconvincing” sound, to quote Pooh Bah. Had you been merely a lawyer, I should never have taken the trouble to write this letter. I should have left you to the collection of six-and-eightpences. I should have merely pictured you in my mental vision as a young man wading laboriously through “Byles on Bills” or “Chitty on Contracts,” or wallowing in the turgid depths of rules nisi or something equally distressing to the lay mind. It is because you have shown that you are more than a lawyer; it is because you have displayed an audacity which has pleased me in plunging into the vortex of politics and pitting your untried strength against the developed muscles and hardened sinews of tough old veteran swimmers that I have deemed you a fit subject to address through the medium of one of my “Letters to Public Men.”

A political aspirant. Far be it from me to attach any obloquy to the expression. The day is not far distant when it will be accounted the highest possible honour to aspire to a position in the political world, and when the term “professional politician,” instead of being a reproach, will be regarded rather as a compliment, for surely he who devotes his life to the solving of the complex problems that beset society is equally as worthy of honour as the man who merely sustains life under the existing unsatisfactory circumstances. The professional politician of the future will not be a glib adventurer with a stock-in-trade of cant sentences and plausible platitudes. He will not be a man who lays one hand on his heart and puts the other in someone else's pocket. He will, on the contrary, be a young, enthusiastic and able man who has studied politics, not as an exact science, but in its relation to



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

the ever-changing conditions of society, who recognises that men and women must advance or decay, and whose one endeavour is to benefit his fellows in every conceivable manner. Is such a man to be sneered at? Rather is he not to be hoped for, prayed for?

After this long exordium you, and doubtless many of my readers, will perhaps have come to the conclusion that I am classing you as a professional politician. I could hardly do that. So far you have only burst like a meteor across the political sky. When you have become a fixed star or even one of a constellation in the political firmament there will be a better opportunity afforded of bringing you within the range of my mental telescope, and of discovering with something like accuracy your precise denomination. Yet even a meteor has its due significance to the keen observer, and so I propose, without asking your permission, to subject you to an analytical process. I shall be very gentle in my treatment, because I think I recognise an affinity between the "case" and the operator. We neither of us belong to the miocene age. We are not encompassed about by antiquity. In our passage through space we like to leave behind us a trail of light just to show that we have been paying unaccustomed regions a visit. And now for a few plain matter-of-fact sentences.

When I first heard that A. J. McLachlan was one of the candidates for the representation of the district of Victoria in the House of Assembly, I made enquiries and learnt that you were a young gentleman who, having just been admitted to the Bar, was about to attempt an entrance into a . . .

I said to myself, "Good. Here is a young fellow with some grit. He is not going to be content with defending drunks in a police court or pleading for a litigious Jew in a local court. He is going at one bound for the Attorney-Generalship." I imagined that you were some bumptious legal fledgling with a profound respect for Symon, Q.C., and an equally profound contempt for anything to which the word "Liberal" might be attached. I expected that when you opened your mouth it would be to curse Kingston and all his works, and to hold up to the admiration of your audiences the little revealed virtues of the National Defence League. This young man of 23—I ascertained your age in my enquiries—would, I thought, from the very nature of his legal training, be found allied on the side of all that is Conservative. Need I explain to you how very agreeably I was disappointed.

Upon reading the report of your first speech at Mount Gambier I was more than astonished. It was a thoroughly Liberal effort. More than that, it was the speech of one who had been a keen



## PROFESSIONAL LIFE

observer of current events. There was a daring about it that I liked. There was an implied contempt of shibboleths that made me recognise a comrade. There was a degree of outspokenness in which I saw another of my special attributes. Now and again as I read I found that our opinions clashed, but this was comparatively seldom. We shall not agree, for instance, as to Bible reading in State schools and the capitation grant. But, touching upon free education and the necessity for yet higher education, the State control of the drink traffic, the simplification of our legal system, the necessity for an Early Closing Bill—I will deal with your scheme at another time—and kindred matters, I saw my own opinions fairly well reflected on the printed sheet. How comes it then that I did not more heartily support your candidature with my pen? My dear sir, your speech was published on a supplement, and I rarely read supplements. Moreover, I felt that it was necessary for Liberalism that Mr. George Riddoch should politically die, and my information was to the effect that Messrs. Cock and Morris could best accomplish his downfall.

It was objected to you during the recent campaign that you were too young to enter political life. Is age to stand before ability? If so, Pitt would not have been Prime Minister of England at 21. To come from the greater to the lesser, if his age had been a bar, Sir Richard Chaffey Baker (then plain Mr. Baker) would not have been a member of our House of Assembly when he was only 27 years old, or 24, as I have heard it stated. A truce of these old-time notions. A man is never too young to begin to serve the State. If he is talented, let us by all means utilise his talents. Don't let us wait until his hair has fallen out and his eyes are dim. In a young country like this, with its almost illimitable possibilities, we want vigorous, energetic, intellectual youth to see that those possibilities are not neglected. Are we not hourly mourning wasted opportunities? Have not our hoary-headed legislators in many instances impeded our advance because their short-sighted visions could not penetrate into a glorious future? If we are to progress let us have youth, or the aspirations of youth, on our side. Old Fogeyism is dead.

What I have written should prove that you are possessed of my sympathy, though on second thoughts you hardly need sympathy when you have the knowledge that 981 electors in the district of Victoria had sufficient confidence in you to give you their votes. Had I known more of you I might have given you some assistance, because your policy is one that I cannot refrain from supporting, even if I desired to do so. In the bright lexicon of youth there's no such word as fail, and so I have no doubt you are already contemplating the campaign of 1899 with ever-rising hopes. Three



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

years will soon roll away, and if at the end of that period I find that your views are in the main what I find them to-day, if I learn, as I believe I shall, that you are still pressing towards the goal every true Liberal desires to reach, you may count upon my most hearty co-operation in your laudable endeavour to do the State some service. Remind me of this promise in January, 1899, and you will, under the circumstances I have named, discover me only too ready to redeem it. Meanwhile, let me subscribe myself yours very faithfully and in true comradeship,

“QUIZ.”

The press generally reported not only my public speeches, but court addresses and cases very fully. My success even attracted notice in the press of other States. My association with Kingston gave me a publicity which, while not always beneficial from a financial point of view, brought considerable grist to the mill.

From 1914, for a year or two, one's professional income shrank considerably. We had not known a war of any magnitude for some considerable time. The commercial mind, under such circumstances, looked for safety, and some very large transactions which were pending were perforce abandoned. From 1918 onwards I led a busy life for seven years.

Many amusing incidents occurred during my professional career. One is worth recording. I was approached to defend a man whose people I knew well, and who had been charged with horse stealing, the venue of the case being Oodnadatta. The circumstances were explained to me, and I pointed out that it would pay them better to let him be committed for trial, that he would be tried at Port Augusta, that the expense of his defence would be probably one-third of the expense of sending me to Oodnadatta, and that, on the facts, he was sure of an acquittal. They thought over this aspect of the matter, and next day returned in company with one of Sir Sidney Kidman's staff and said they wished me to go to Oodnadatta, and get him off there. They promptly paid a large fee and my expenses. It took just about a week to get there and back.



## PROFESSIONAL LIFE

The Oodnadatta Court was an adjunct in those days of the local hotel, with a small platform at one end, on which was placed a table and a desk for the presiding magistrate. The case came on for hearing on a very hot morning, and the magistrate, who shall be nameless, listened patiently to the formal evidence, and when the prosecutor, who really believed he owned the horse my client was supposed to have stolen, got in the box, the temperature had risen. He gave his evidence, and produced a receipt dated 1898. It was written on a sheet of notepaper printed for an Adelaide hotel, and there still remained evidence that the paper could not have existed at that time, as the figures "19" still remained. He swore definitely that this was the receipt he got for the horse, and upon my turning the paper before him, got into a state of considerable agitation. There was no necessity to produce any receipt at all, but the constable in his anxiety to prove everything had produced this document apparently without looking at it carefully. Cross-examination was a little overwhelming, and at the conclusion of the prosecutor's evidence, the magistrate, without consulting anybody, announced the adjournment of the court. This seemed to me an appropriate opportunity for refreshing ourselves, and at considerable expense I invited the residents, nearly all of whom had turned up, to have some refreshment. The publican, who kept his sodawater in a very cool state by suspending it in wet bags, brought all hands from the bar. The magistrate had a very long whisky and soda, the accused had a drink, the prosecutor—in fact, all the assembled throng. The magistrate having finished his drink without removing the glass from his lips once it got there, dashed it when empty down alongside his desk, and said promptly—"Case dismissed!" I could scarcely restrain myself, but I remarked to the publican who was standing close by, "That is the best argument I ever addressed to a court."

I often thought of sending this story to the press, but for years I refrained because that presiding magistrate was a fine type of man. He managed one of the largest stations



north of Oodnadatta, and managed it with great success. Apparently he required that stimulant to give him the necessary courage to adopt the view so strongly pressed by myself. The unfortunate accused man did not live long to enjoy his liberty. As I returned in the train from Hergott to Quorn I received a telegram that he had been crushed to his death that day while roping horses in yards at Oodnadatta.

I remember the last criminal case in which I was engaged. It was, I think, in 1930, and I had returned to Adelaide, my party in Parliament being then in opposition. The client was a man of importance, of good family but somewhat reckless, and he was charged with a crime and committed for trial. His people insisted that I should defend him, and I undertook the defence before Mr. Justice Parsons. At the conclusion of the Crown evidence I strongly pressed the judge to dismiss the case, and to refuse to let it go to the jury. I think he thought I was right, made up his mind to sum up accordingly, and finally said: "But let the jury decide it!" The case was concluded, and was even improved by the evidence given by the accused and by other persons. I proceeded to address the jury. With long experience one is able to judge tolerably well whether the jury is hostile or otherwise, and, while I felt during the course of my address that the jury in the main were with me, I had an uneasy feeling that one individual on the jury was hostile. I hammered every point home. At 4 o'clock I had to leave the case in charge of my partner to catch the train for Melbourne en route for Sydney. I asked him to telegraph me the result. I became considerably alarmed next day when no telegram had reached me up to the time of the departure of the train. To my relief, at Seymour I got a telegram notifying the acquittal of my client.

My partner, on my return, mentioned to me that he had noticed the hostility of this jurymen, and as it was a case of "all's well that ends well," I thought no more of the matter until Mr. Justice Parsons, before whom I appeared on some chamber application, called me back, and said: "There was



## PROFESSIONAL LIFE

a man on that jury that had it in for you or for your client. I hesitated," he said, "about withdrawing the case, and thought after your address that all would be well. I noticed, however, the hostility of an individual jurymen, and it struck me that the hostility was personal to you." Thinking about the matter I made some enquiries, and the Sheriff was good enough to give me the names of all the men on the panel, and as he happened to be in court I was able to identify the gentleman. For a moment I had no recollection, but it came to me afterwards. He was a man whom, years before, I had occasion severely to cross-examine before the Master in his chambers. He became so agitated under the pressure that he bit the end of the table in his emotion. It was an equity suit, and he and others were obliged to disgorge a considerable sum to their sisters. Although I had forgotten him he apparently had not forgotten me, even though I was only briefed by another solicitor in the matter. Evidently he thought to square accounts.

So, to the young practitioner on the criminal side I would say, exercise your right of challenge, and try to remember if there is anyone in the panel whom you have trounced as part of your professional duty, for human nature very frequently asserts itself in the jury room.

As far as I recollect this was the only criminal case in which I appeared after 1925. Of civil cases I had many. The last, I think, was a collision action, in which I was for the plaintiff, opposed by Mr. E. E. Cleland, K.C. His was an extraordinarily subtle mind. I used to remark to him that, in argument, he went from limb to limb, and one could never detect him in flight. On this occasion I was able conclusively to prove that his client could not see vehicles approaching, and the verdict went to me.

Mr. Justice Cleland had a wonderful memory, even for detail. He was at a gathering one evening in full court dress. In the robing room afterwards, as we were taking our departure, he said: "Mac, I haven't a shilling. Lend me a



shilling or two." I promptly produced two shillings, with which he proceeded to make the necessary contribution. I left Adelaide the next day. It must have been over two years afterwards before I met him again. I had emerged from the post office in King William Street, and he was walking to lunch. After I saluted him, he promptly put his hand in his pocket, and said: "I owe you two shillings, McLachlan." I had forgotten all about it until he reminded me of the occasion. I rejoined: "I will pouch the two shillings," referring to an expression which Mr. Percy Stow had used on one occasion when he suggested in a large equity suit that it was "time the Bar and the solicitors had pouched a cheque." This expression amused the gentleman who was then Mr. Cleland.

I acted for many commercial firms and was standing Counsel under retainer for many years to the Adelaide Chamber of Commerce. Under the Chamber's instructions I prepared a report upon the Bankruptcy Bill which was being brought before the Federal Parliament. As I had a fair share of the insolvency work in South Australia I was pretty familiar with the practice and general principles of bankruptcy law. The report so commended itself to the executive of the Chamber that they printed it. It was headed "Adelaide Chamber of Commerce," and underneath, in smaller type, "Report by Mr. A. J. McLachlan." It was circulated freely, and as the associated Chambers were meeting in conference in Sydney, it was decided that I should accompany them to express the Chamber's views on this piece of legislation.

Mr. Sam Jacobs, himself trained in the law, was a tower of strength. Faced with the sub-committee in Sydney we had to fight hard to get the inclusion of some provisions in the Bill that were peculiar to South Australia's Act. Sydney lawyers, Newcastle lawyers, and, I think, one country practitioner represented the Sydney side. There was one extraordinarily astute mind from Victoria, Mr. R. B. Lemon, who, once being convinced that the South Australian provisions



## PROFESSIONAL LIFE

were beneficial, greatly assisted us in having them included in the measure. It was ultimately passed by the Federal Parliament, the intricacies of the matter being in the main left, I understand, to the professional gentlemen who were in Parliament.

Some slight amendments have been made to the Act, but it has proved a contribution of considerable value in the commercial life of Australia.

One amusing incident arose. Amongst the members of the Law Society of New South Wales was a solicitor who bore the same name and initials as myself, he being Alexander Joseph, and I being Alexander John. He was a member of the firm who were our Sydney agents, and having been invited to join with me at my hotel in Sydney, saw lying on a desk some copies of the report. He promptly seized a pen-knife, removed the words at the top—"Adelaide Chamber of Commerce"—and asked me if he could have two or three copies. I promptly handed them to him, and was much amused afterwards to ascertain the use he had made of them. He was one of the Committee appointed by the Law Society to report upon the Bankruptcy Bill. He had been very busy, and found my report in the main acceptable. He tabled it at the next meeting of the Committee, and was about to be thanked at the conclusion of the proceedings when he promptly informed them that it was stolen goods.

The war years caused a great deal of disturbance to the commercial life of the community, and my assistance had frequently to be sought in unravelling all sorts of transactions.

A member of the Employers' Federation approached me with the view of my office sharing the arbitration work on the industrial side with another well-known Adelaide firm. It necessitated some consideration, as the work was not only considerable in volume, but remunerative. I had by this time formed the opinion that there were too many of what a distinguished friend once called "entangling legalisms," and



had come to the conclusion that trials such as were engaged in were not only far too costly, but left neither side satisfied. Having regard to this dominating fact, and to the further consideration that one would have to arm himself with a tremendous amount of literature, and keep a special staff to deal with the matter, I recommended the Employers' Federation not to divide the business, but to give it to one office that could specialise in that particular class of business, and I frankly said that I had no great desire to get into that class of work. The business was given to the other firm. Personally, I have never regarded a judicial trial as an appropriate means of settling industrial matters.

The Wages Board system has worked, on the whole, tolerably well where sincerity is present on both sides. The men concerned know the work. The worker knows what he has to do, the employer knows what he ought to do.

One's practice in South Australia was of a somewhat varied character. Now and again you would have an Admiralty action, probably an action for specific performance, and it was extraordinary how you would get a crop of the same class of actions following each other very quickly, and then months might elapse before you had another of the same type.

I had a large bankruptcy practice. On one occasion I restrained the Adelaide Corporation. Murray led in this case, and the nominal plaintiff was my partner Vandenberg, who was a ratepayer of the city. The action was really on behalf of the Neuchatel Company, whose general manager in Australia was a personal friend. The action was launched on my opinion, and as it was to be stoutly contested I indicated to my client that he should have the opinion of a silk, because in the event of failure, he was likely to be blamed by his Board for not having done so. He finally agreed, and, after much cogitation, Murray confirmed my view. During the course of the hearing Sir Josiah Symon, who was leading Counsel for the Corporation, made some dis-



## PROFESSIONAL LIFE

paraging and rude remarks which brought from me a somewhat cutting retort. Murray immediately whispered to me: "Let him go, McLachlan. Leave him alone. He is looking for a row, as he has got no case." Murray abhorred a scene. We won, however, and the Neuchatel asphalt still extends along Hindley and Rundle Streets—I hope to the advantage of the city.

I once restrained the Salvation Army, who had erected a hall and who, by their methods of worship and praising God with musical instruments, and with considerable noise and vigour, had rendered a private residence at Mount Gambier almost untenable. Way, Chief Justice, who tried this case, had a tremendous sympathy for the work of the Army, and did his best to induce me to settle, and when he found it was of no avail, did what I expected of his great mind, made the restraining order.

On my joining Kingston, the new firm took over the uncompleted work of his old firm, and fortunately amongst that work there remained to be done a vast amount on a pedigree case under instructions from an English firm, who desired no expense to be spared. We had to prove the death or existence of one individual person in order that the client of our English firm, who inherited with, I think, two brothers, could claim a very large sum of money which was in chancery. The search for this individual or a record of his death proceeded in Queensland, New South Wales, Tasmania and Western Australia, but without result. Strangely enough, his death was discovered by one of the firm's clerks while touring in Wales. The man had returned to England, had settled in some small village in Wales, and the clerk, while holidaying, had stumbled upon his tombstone. The costs arising from this enquiry were considerable, and Kingston & Ash's share was credited to that firm, and it was well that this was so, as we were confronted with a considerable loss owing to a guarantee which had been given by Kingston & Ash in respect of two months' working expenses on a mine at Kalgoorlie.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

The London solicitors had requested this to be done, and had agreed to indemnify Kingston & Ash against any loss. Mr. Ash had consulted Kingston, and they gave the guarantee, notwithstanding a protest by their managing clerk, who had left a Biblical message on Mr. Kingston's table—"He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it." Notwithstanding the warning, the solicitors' indemnity appeared to satisfy the two partners. It cost the old firm several hundred pounds, and little or nothing was ever recovered from the London firm.

The costs resulting from the pedigree case to which I have referred, helped to ease the position considerably.

Led by Sir Josiah Symon, I acted for Dr. Ramsay Smith in an enquiry under the Public Service Act. He was the Health Officer and Coroner, and on the death of a celebrated aborigine known as "Tommy Walker," had had his head removed and sent for scientific purposes to the Edinburgh University, his alma mater. This having been brought to the notice of the Government, Smith was suspended from office, and, as he was entitled to an enquiry, he demanded it. There was a good deal of feeling, and many amusing incidents occurred during the hearing. However, Smith emerged triumphant, and was reinstated, but had to face a considerable bill of costs, of which the Government paid but a small part.

Tommy Walker was a quaint character. He consumed any liquor that was made available to him, and was a person of most cheerful moods. His favourite rhyme was—

"Tommy Walker, walk up here.  
You are charged with drinking beer;  
Seven-and-six you'll have to pay.  
Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay"

The Aborigines Friends' Association, through their solicitor, had made me a sort of standing Counsel for the defence



## PROFESSIONAL LIFE

of aborigines charged with serious crime. One could not help noticing the quickness of their wits.

I was defending one native, supposed to be civilised, from Point McLeay. He was accused of killing another black, the weapon employed being a beer bottle. The case was called on one morning in the Supreme Court before Mr. Justice Gordon.

The formal medical evidence was taken, and just before the adjournment, the star witness for the Crown, another habitué of Point McLeay, was put in the box. He was a young man, and I observed answered questions for the Crown Solicitor with some reluctance. The court adjourned, and during the adjournment I had occasion, a little while before the resumption of the trial, to descend the stair leading to the court. Coming up was the witness, who was returning to the precincts. He flashed a brilliant smile at me. He rolled his eyes, in effect telegraphing me without saying a word that he was all for me. The Crown Solicitor finished with him, and I quickly found that he was friendly. Our defence was that the whole thing was a drunken brawl, and that anybody may have hit the murdered man. The witness bore this out, the Crown Solicitor became very unhappy, and as I sat down the judge asked the Crown Solicitor whether he proposed to continue with the case under the circumstances. After a hurried consultation, the Crown Solicitor said he could take it no further, and the presiding judge directed the jury to bring in a verdict of "Not guilty," which they promptly did.

I frequently thought of testing the question of whether we were entitled to try the wild black by our laws. They have their own tribal laws. Everybody knows about the bone pointing business, and the dire consequences that ensue to those who are pointed at, and the relatives of those at whom the bone is pointed.

I went to Port Augusta once armed with authority and prepared to argue the question, but on this occasion the



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

Crown case broke down owing to the unreliability of a witness.

I remember arguing the case of a coloured girl stated by Mr. Justice Gordon. She had been found guilty of manslaughter by a jury on a circuit. The Mount Gambier solicitor who had defended her claimed that it was either murder or nothing, and persuaded the judge to state a case. The Solicitor to the Aborigines' Friends' Association had me briefed, and, notwithstanding the view of Sir John Gordon, who, I think, approved of the verdict, Sir Samuel Way and his colleague accepted my argument, and the prisoner was acquitted.

It was not a very profitable class of business. The fees were restricted, but one usually had another case if he had to go on circuit, and one had to take the business in one's stride.

A study of the Australian native is both interesting and instructive. He has all the characteristics of the young Australian. He is devoted to sport, and will give any amount of service in either chasing the kangaroo and the emu, or engaging in the destruction of game on the water or anywhere he can find it. He will work for a time, but civilised or otherwise, he will at periods leave off work and insist on having a "walk-about," usually with his tribe.

He has considerable native cunning, and I recollect, on a visit to Oodnadatta to which I have referred in another connection, observing this trait in his character.

A visitor, a prominent officer of the State Savings Bank, had travelled up with me on the train, and as he had never seen the native in action, I thought it was a good idea to arrange for a corroboree. A number of the more or less civilised natives had been driven in by the dry season, and a partial drought in their neighbourhood, and several hundreds were hanging about Oodnadatta. As I was away from the township for a whole day through the courtesy of



## PROFESSIONAL LIFE

the local sergeant of police, who took me for a tour, I arranged with the hotelkeeper to fix up the corroboree, and to promise the blacks some bags of flour if they would perform. On my return in the evening, and after the evening meal, I saw no signs of the preparations for the corroboree. I saw the hotelkeeper and noticed hanging about the yard and sitting on the rails some four or five quite youthful blackfellows. The hotelkeeper asked them when they were going to start. They merely grinned, looked very sheepish and said nothing. Being accustomed to their habits, he immediately concluded that they had not had the flour, and went off to see about it. Finding the flour stacked in front of the bar, where it had been left, he sent them off to get it, and, within a few minutes, my friend saw the spectacle of an Australian corroboree. They had evidently been prepared, because they danced and made a tremendous row, decorated with all manner and colour of pigments which abound in the neighbourhood. Some were a bright red, some were almost white, and garlands of various descriptions hung from their bodies. They sang and they cavorted until one became almost tired, owing to the similarity of the performance. The corroboree terminated suddenly. The evening was hot and sultry. A thunderstorm burst over the town; the thunder roared and the lightning flashed, and, with a rapidity that was amazing the whole body of the makers of the corroboree had disappeared as it were into the earth. It was an extraordinary sight. The thunder appeared to terrify them. Their astuteness, however, in withholding their services until they saw reward in front of them struck me as somewhat Australian.

They make good stockmen, and the gin is an excellent shepherd. She walks flat-footed, is a very silent mover, and the merino sheep take little or no notice of a gin moving amongst them. In earlier days they were extensively used in parts of Australia, and proved, while they would remain at work, excellent shepherds.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

They are terrified of anything they think is supernatural. Two old friends of mine had a cattle station on the Cooper. They had paid a visit to the old country, leaving a friend in charge, and their head stockman, a blackfellow called Peter. On their return they brought one of the musical boxes which were then obtaining some vogue overseas. Peter was delighted with the musical box. On their second visit some years later they brought a gramophone back, and, as the equipment and supplies had to be brought out per camel-back, the brothers had returned to the station some weeks before. Peter was reporting his day's work, and the condition of the cattle on a part of the property, which was of considerable extent, to one of the brothers in his office, which was situated at one end of the bungalow house. The report being concluded and the gramophone being on hand, a song probably by Harry Lauder was turned on. Peter immediately rushed along the verandah and right outside at the further end of the bungalow, where he encountered the other brother dealing with some sheep. Seeing the terror in Peter's eye, the brother asked him what was the matter. Peter, in great agitation, afraid to admit his terror, with a quickness of wit, immediately said: "Me like him better outside, boss." He covered his fear, and, no doubt, before long began to appreciate the voices coming as it were from nowhere.

The quickness of this lad's wit in finding an excuse for his fear illustrates the readiness of mind of our black brothers.

The race is disappearing. It has many peculiar qualities. Its members have an extraordinarily keen eyesight, their hearing is acute, and their smoke signalling has really never been explained.

With one word I leave the native, and it is this. In the neighbourhood of the Murray and in other districts where game abounded and fish was to be found in profusion, the physique of the native was much better than in the drier



## PROFESSIONAL LIFE

areas of the State. The Wellington black in South Australia had been well fed, and was a well-furnished man, whereas those in the drier northern regions suffered severely at times, were ill-nourished and apparently did not develop into such a stalwart race.



## COMMERCE

HAVING for years acted as adviser to the Hume Brothers, who had formed a small company called the Hume Brothers Cement & Iron Company, I was struck with the extraordinary mental capacity of W. R. Hume. He was a man of remarkable inventive capacity, who had passed through very hard times in Victoria, and had finally settled in Adelaide, where, in partnership with his brother, he carried on an iron and steel works. In conference, and even in seeking advice, he was almost tongue-tied, but, given the suitable initiative in the way of a question or a suggestion, he would immediately become quite lucid.

The brothers had consulted me from time to time, and he—Mr. W. R. Hume—had patented a process for the spinning of concrete pipes. He was informed by scientists that he was fighting against all known hydraulic laws. Still he persevered. His first experiment was with a flowerpot spun at great rapidity into which he placed concrete mixed to a certain density, and satisfied himself that the thing could be done. A small company was formed, and a few local enthusiasts who knew Hume, and admired his mental capacity and his determination, supported the venture, and it was run much on the lines of a private company.

As years went by his patent attracted notice in other parts of the world. He contacted men like Sir Percy Fitzpatrick in South Africa, the Stanton Steelworks in England, and various interests in Germany and France. It was obvious that the small private concern would have to launch into something bigger to deal with Australia's requirements. Hume disliked the idea of parting with control, and sold his rights in the State of New South Wales for, I think it was £10,000, to the New South Wales Government. This enabled



## COMMERCE

his company to open up in Victoria, and in the year 1920, I was instructed to draft proposals for the formation of a new company. Having decided on this step, he requested me to accompany him to a meeting that had been called in Melbourne. The result was the formation of the Hume Pipe Company.

It was suggested that I should take a seat on the Board, and as this was a departure from the terms of my articles of partnership, I had to seek the consent of my partners before joining. They agreed. I found amongst my colleagues men of outstanding ability. Sir John Monash was one. Himself an engineer, and the part owner of the Monier works, he recognised the superiority of the spun pipe, and, having satisfactorily arranged his interests with his partner in the Monier business, came on to the Board of the Hume Pipe Company.

Sir John sought the consent of the Electricity Commission, of which he had become Chairman, and of the Government of the day, to continue his seat on the Hume Pipe Company, which he did till the time of his death. The quickness of his perception was remarkable. He was a trained engineer, and a Doctor of Laws. Burke once said that a training in law "does more to quicken and invigorate the human understanding than all the other kinds of learning put together."

Our first Chairman was a remarkably able business man. He was Mr. Robert Nettlefold, of Hobart. Sound in his conclusions, always ready to listen to argument, and with an extraordinarily pleasant manner, he presided over the deliberations of the newly-formed company. He was a martyr to sea sickness, and really relinquished his seat on the Board owing to the fact that the passage of Bass Strait used to leave him prostrate for a period of time.

I succeeded him as Chairman, and have remained as Chairman ever since. Monash has passed, and with him has passed a great mind. Mr. W. R. Hume has passed, and with him has gone one of the most inventive spirits that



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

Australia has ever produced. He was dauntless and resourceful. Mr. Robert Nettlefold has gone. I can say of him that he was one of the most pleasant, courteous and sound men with whom it has been my pleasure to associate.

Hume, before his death, had added some improvements to the original design of pipe in the method of its manufacture. Time changes most things, and I remember full well in the days of my novitiate as a director, on making an inspection of the works, remarking to Hume that the feeding of the concrete should be done automatically. He said that it could not. They tried everything, but the human touch was necessary to keep the slurry at the proper density. I accepted this with some doubts, and put the same proposition to Sir John Monash one day. He informed me that Hume was right. They had tried all sorts of automatic devices without success. It is a somewhat arduous business feeding the pipes spun at tremendous velocity, and men have to be relieved from time to time.

Years have passed, and, thanks to the ingenuity of some American in another connection, a machine has now been adapted to the use that I originally visualised, which saves a tremendous amount of physical labour, and speeds up production considerably.

The Hume Pipe Company has spread its wings practically the world over. A subsidiary company formed at Singapore prior to the Japanese capture of that centre was proving its value to the Malay Peninsula and to China. The Japanese had acquired the patent rights; India was working on a royalty basis, and in Britain royalties formed the basis of an agreement. South Africa, of course, was an independent company. The exploitation of the patent in America had been interrupted. Improvements from time to time had been made in the production and manufacture of the pipe, and in centres where suitable material is available the concrete pipe presents the appearance of marble.

Having entered into the commercial world, although I did so more in the spirit of helping Hume than with the



## COMMERCE

idea of earning emoluments, my services were sought by other companies.

The aftermath of the 1914-18 war produced a number of companies. Their conception was in some cases sound, in others the reverse. Management in the intricacies of fire and life insurance is essential.

There is one story I should tell, and perhaps at my own expense. The Hume directors lunched together at the expense of the chairman at a small hotel neighbouring their office. I chaffed Sir John one day about Yallourn, knowing nothing whatever about it, and told him in the language that Mr. John Verran had applied to a mine he had nationalised at Moonta, that it was a "vertible lying-in home." Sir John took it in quite good part, and asked me what I would do about it. I had just returned from a tour of Tasmania, and had observed the Great Lake and its potentialities for further development. I immediately said: "You should have had a high tension wire across Bass Strait. Nature in Tasmania has given you all the power you require." He looked at me for a moment, and said: "That is damn clever, McLachlan, but it is not the first time it was thought of," and proceeded to explain to me the difficulties that stood in the way.

I noticed recently that a gentleman from my own State in the Federal Parliament raised the question, and I am wondering whether anything has been done scientifically in the meantime to prevent leakage.

My acceptance of a seat on the Hume Pipe board necessitated my frequent attendance in Melbourne, and I was in touch with a number of other interests, some of which turned out profitable and others the reverse. On the whole, my commercial ventures have been successful. Land I have purchased, and I have never had occasion to regret its purchase. Never have I lost money through the purchase of land, and I have made considerable sums by judicious investment and calculated development.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

I had a strong feeling that South Australia had made a mistake in not intensifying her development in the regions of the high rainfall. The south-east in the old days had been comparatively neglected, while the drier regions of the far north had been looked to as a proper line of development. An old Surveyor-General, basing, no doubt, his opinions on nature, had long ago laid down a line known as "Goyder's Line," outside of which it was unsafe to embark on cultivation, owing to the paucity of the rainfall. Notwithstanding this, the south-eastern portion, with its heavy rainfall, was left to a large extent to stagnate. Drainage schemes were finally embarked upon and gradually the position improved. Goyder had a good mind. He saw from the nature of the blue bush, the cotton bush and the salt bush that in the northern areas there was an intermittent rainfall, and that except in large areas with huge schemes of water conversation it was unsafe.

Parts of this country are highly productive. Some 30 or 40 miles from Oodnadatta, at some waterhole in a creek that gives a permanent supply, I have seen Chinamen producing by the most primitive methods magnificent vegetables, and supplying the whole railway line to the south with cabbages and all sorts of vegetables. The water they brought up in tins, which they hung on yokes, and irrigated their patches. The toil was hard, but the Chinaman is a solid and incessant worker and he produces results. There is no doubt whatever that at a period before the white man's occupation there was a drought period in this country more severe than anything which has been experienced by us. I have seen its results not far from Port Augusta, and beyond, where trees standing in water-courses have died as the result. I trust that no such visitation awaits us, but from time to time we have had our warnings.

By way of contrast, I have seen some of the most magnificent cattle sent from the great interior. I have seen merino sheep, of a weight that would astound one, grown on this country. The sheep are hardy and will live under their



## COMMERCE

difficult conditions, and, properly supervised and intelligently crossed, grow magnificent clips.

On the whole, my ventures into commercial life were successful, and led me to embark on a political career which was not altogether distasteful. I had throughout my professional life feared that one could easily become a "black-letter" lawyer. They are usually men of narrow outlook, but steeped in learning. I had encountered some, and I felt that a life such as they lived deprived one of all human contacts. For the same reason, the judiciary had no charms for me. In years gone by the judges were as men apart. Their association with their fellows betook of a certain amount of unreality which did not appeal to me. A judge, particularly in a small community, has to walk with great care. His social contacts are too few. There seems to be a barrier line between himself and his fellowmen.



## SPORT

My early upbringing was amongst horses. Horses were the one means, after the passing of the bullock-dray, by which operations in the countryside were conducted. The thoroughbred has always attracted a great deal of interest amongst Australians, and, as Gordon puts it:

“There may be more links ’twixt the horse and his rider  
Than ever your shallow philosophy guessed.”

The men employed on the neighbouring stations vied with those employed by my father in their love and admiration for their mounts. Contests were not unknown. There was a stretch of flat land not far from our homestead that lent itself to tests of pace and endurance amongst a class of horse some usually refer to as hacks, which had a considerable amount of thoroughbred in their breeding. We had a few on the property, and is it to be wondered, although my father strictly forbade any galloping, that for amusement and trial of the horses the colt-breaker and the men, and even my brother, engaged in equine tests from time to time?

The whole neighbourhood teemed with stories about the feats of various equine favourites, and the actual race meetings held in the neighbouring towns were a great attraction.

To-day the motor-bike provides the pace for those who in old days would have preferred the thrill of flying through the air on horse-flesh, but the fact remains that racing tests between horses, whether over hurdles or fences or on the flat, are of overpowering interest to the majority of Australians.

Surrounded by such an atmosphere, it is not to be won-



## SPORT

dered that in after life I spent a good deal of my time and some of my money in attending race meetings, and became particularly interested in thoroughbreds.

My first essay was with a steeplechaser which I had sent from the south-east to my brother's station in the north. He was well bred and, while under lease to a local sportsman, had won the Silver City Cup at Broken Hill. My brother and I brought him to Adelaide and proceeded—as he was a very safe jumper—to train him for big fences. He was a very rough horse to ride, but had a tremendous amount of pace and was a good stayer.

As in those far-away days I lived no great distance from the Victoria Park racecourse, I used, at an early hour in the morning, to go down and watch the work that this horse did, and, in addition, the trainer, who was a very sound man, gave him considerable exercise during the day in walking through the hills. We had in mind to win the Oakbank Steeplechase with him. This race, which calls for great staying power, certainly at the fences, which were in those days very stiff, attracted the best fencers from Victoria.

Watching this horse work, and knowing his capacity as a fencer, I came to the conclusion that we should start him at a meeting at Victoria Park in December, so that he might have a good try-out. He worked so well that I wrote my brother to come down, as I was in partnership with him in the venture. Prior to his arrival I was stricken down with diphtheria, and my friends and relatives were greatly disturbed concerning my condition. My partner, Kingston, who was somewhat emotional at times, shed tears on getting the medical report. I was supposed to be delirious, but I had a perfect recollection of all that had taken place. By the Friday I had improved, and when my brother came to see me I told him to put £10 on the horse—a fiver for each of us—as I thought he had a really good chance. My brother was so disturbed about my condition and the rumours that were current that he scarcely took my suggestion seriously



and put £1 on for each of us and £1 for the trainer. The horse won and paid £28. I heard of it while still in bed, and was rejoicing that I had almost made enough to pay my medical expenses, which were pretty heavy. I had invited the night nurse to attend the races with me on the Saturday as the guest of myself and my wife. I suppose she regarded it as part of my delirium, because I was not allowed to stir out of bed for many days after. My brother came out on the Sunday to see me and explained the position. I think he scarcely realised that I had gauged the condition of our steeplechaser even more accurately than the trainer.

I recovered, and we determined to save the horse for the Oakbank Steeplechase the following Easter. In this he took his place and ran a creditable race, meeting, however, the redoubtable Domino, a beautiful horse from Victoria, who won the race over the up-hill, down-dale course at Oakbank. We ran a good fourth and, as we were well in the four at the last fence, I thought it was a certainty that we should win. He was a rough jumper, although sure, but gave the horseman a most uncomfortable ride, and the rider was so exhausted that he did not ride the desperate finish that I had expected, otherwise we might have been closer to the winner.

For years I had an interest in horses in partnership with my brother. We bred from Alawa, the great Victorian sire. We bred from Pistol to get the Carbine strain. We bred from a sire purchased by my brother, whose lines of blood at the moment I forget. The sire was named The Leader. The mare, a thoroughbred with the King Alfred strain of blood, threw a colt foal, which we somewhat happily called Unicorn. He was a beautiful horse, somewhat lightly fleshed, but a delightful mover. We brought him to the city practically untried and won a race with him at Port Adelaide, expecting a great dividend for our modest investment. A rumour had got round that he had been tried over the course and did a wonderful gallop. In truth and



## SPORT

fact, he had never been galloped at Port Adelaide at all, but was confused with some other animal owned by a trainer who worked his horses on the Port Adelaide course. He promised to be a really good horse, but, unfortunately, got a chill while being conveyed by train to Broken Hill, which developed into a somewhat serious trouble and prevented him racing again. We sold him as a sire to a north-western pastoralist for use on his station.

Uanna, who had little staying powers, but was extraordinarily fast for five or six furlongs, held the Port Adelaide record in a five-furlong race for a considerable time. She paid her way, and on retirement from the turf was put to Alawa, my brother's favourite Australian sire in that day. Her first foal was a filly named Uracca. She was a great deceiver, giving you in her working gallops on the track a record that would have justified support even in a Melbourne Cup, and yet when it came to a race, she used to fail ignominiously.

When my brother took over the whole of my interest in the thoroughbreds we had acquired jointly, Uracca was one of the number. One day he started her at Victoria Park and as the jockey who was to have ridden her fell sick, a stable boy was put on. My brother had become very tired of putting money on her, but viewing her in her stall I thought she looked fresh and bright, and decided to risk £1 on her, notwithstanding all her failures. I met my brother as he was walking up to the members' stand, and mentioned to him what I had done. He said: "You have wasted your £1. A stable boy is riding her, and I have not put a threepenny bit on her. She has deceived me too often." Uracca won and paid £108, which cheered me considerably. The stable boy and she appeared to get on very well, but she was so unsatisfactory in flat racing that my brother ultimately put her over hurdles, where she proved really first class, won several hurdle races in South Australia, and was brought to Melbourne for the Cup hurdle race. The trainer found it beneficial to allow her to be in the



sun for an hour or two, and turned her out in the yard adjoining the hotel. An aeroplane, flying low, alarmed her. She got excited and struck a post, splitting her knee-cap and rendering her useless for the future for racing. My brother retired her to his stud.

It is wonderful how quickly horses adapt themselves to certain things. In my early years they were scared of steam engines, they were scared of motor cars, and, later, they were scared of aeroplanes. To-day they pass the steam engine without concern, and treat the motor car just as they would treat a passing buggy, and it will not be long before they will disregard aerial movement.

The best horse I think I part owned was Carl Dour. Some sporting writer said he was the most happily-named horse in Australia, being by Carlyon out of a Bill of Portland mare called Grumpy. He was a tremendous horse and had tremendous feet, very deep in the frog and very wide in the hoof. We won several races with him, and sent him to Melbourne when we found that he was a true stayer and won the Stand Handicap. We had him in the Toorak Handicap and the Caulfield Cup. Raced in the Toorak on the Saturday, really to give him a race, because in a mile he had very little chance, he appeared to be lame and on the Sunday was resting his near forefoot. The trainer telephoned my brother and myself and we went out to inspect him. It was obvious he could not work, and the Caulfield Cup was on the following Saturday. It was at first thought he must have hit his shoulder against a post in the Toorak, but there was obviously nothing the matter. A close examination of his hoof and the insertion of a steel probe into the frog caused him to flinch considerably. We examined his hoof carefully and found a most objectionable stench. We sent for a veterinary surgeon, who discovered a most unusual condition, which he said he had never found in a thoroughbred horse in Australia, but it was quite common in heavy draught horses in England, a disease called thrush. We opened the hoof up and



## SPORT

found what looked like a series of water blisters that gave off the most vile smell. The veterinary was somewhat intrigued, but said Carl Dour would be all right in a day or two, and prescribed treatment. He informed us that damp, and soil or sand in the hoof, used to produce this condition on the heavy horses in England, who were constantly standing in more or less damp places.

It appeared as if this horse, who had very large feet and open frogs, and who was trained on the Caulfield track, had picked up a certain amount of sand while working and this condition had been generated. It was unfortunate, but we started him in the Caulfield Cup. He ran an excellent race, was pocketed at the turn into the straight, and was carrying a horse called Pendil as they swung in. Pendil got away, but was unable to catch Aborigine and Blue Book, who made a dead-heat in the Cup, Pendil running third, with Carl Dour immediately behind him. It was bad luck, but we were compensated on our return to Adelaide by winning the Port Adelaide Cup. The price, however, was very short.

I never raced in my own name. My clientele in my profession consisted of all types, and, as I used to point out to my brother, it did not matter to him, who was a wool-grower, what happened on the racecourse, but it would matter a great deal to me if I happened to get mixed up in any trouble caused by people over whom we had no control. He begged me to continue, but I just mentioned to him that I had advised two men, who had been my clients for some years, concerning a disqualification which they had suffered at the hands of the stipendiary stewards, and who were really the victims of a combination between trainers and jockeys, and as in one's professional life you could not afford to have anything of this sort brought against you, I thought it preferable to hand over my interest to him. We had some 30 or 40 thoroughbreds, and he compensated me. The only thing I made him promise was that if he won a Cup, I must be well on. He did



afterwards win the Melbourne Cup, and I had great difficulty in persuading him to back his horse, because he argued that the price was far too short, although he had won the Hotham Handicap the previous Saturday. I ultimately induced him to back him, and to back him for me.

Many curious incidents arise in racing. Many a disappointment is suffered, many a victory quite unexpected takes place, and the onlookers sometimes marvel and suspect all sorts of things. I recollect one such occasion at a country race meeting that used to take place not far from my brother's station. There was a Cup for district horses, and my brother had a pretty good animal that should have easily captured this race. There was a stipulation that there should not be less than seven starters. The neighbouring stations had nominated, and my brother, in order to ensure a race, had nominated two buggy horses. They were named Romulus and Remus. He had what was believed to be the best horse, and the neighbouring squatters knew something about him, and knew that they had little or no chance, and some of them refrained from bringing their nominations to the meeting. There were only six starters, including my brother's good horse, and my brother, therefore, in order to see that the rules were complied with and enable the race to be run, started one of his buggy horses. He brought a jockey specially to ride his selected thoroughbred and, of course, the price was cramped, and when he put a fiver on that was practically the end of the betting. The track was an open bush track marked by posts with flags. The start went all right, the buggy horse toiling away in the rear. One neighbour's horse bolted off the track, another ran off in an opposite direction, my brother's so-called certainty ran inside one of the posts and had to be pulled up. Various fatalities of a like nature occurred, and my brother's victor was the buggy horse. He won—the only one who had followed the correct course. I chaffed my brother, and frequently recorded it at little lunches and dinners. This story is an illustration of the uncertainty of racing.



## SPORT

There is another side of it. A good story is told in racing circles of a well-known Sydney bookmaker who made up a party which went to a little country meeting in New South Wales. They decided to operate, and during the day met with some success, as bookmakers usually do. There was a race with only three horses starting and the bookmakers closed up their books and retired, as it was regarded as a certainty.

The more responsible man kept on betting, and as the odds were very cramped was doing little or no business. Presently a bewhiskered little chap arrived and asked the price of one horse that appeared to have no chance whatever. The bookmaker named a good price under the circumstances, and after a certain amount of bargaining the countryman said he would take 500 to 50. Notwithstanding the position, he was laid this and asked if he would like it again. He said, "Yes," and it was accordingly booked to him. Judge the amazement of the bookmaker when the horse this individual had backed romped in, a comfortable winner. He had a very expensive afternoon, and finally, meeting the backer, said to him that he had had a good win. The little man said "Yes." He said, "You are a lucky man to win that money," and the little man still continued to say "Yes." The bookmaker, probing the matter further, said, "You know, I own that horse and did not give him a chance." The backer then rejoined, "Ah, yes, but I owned the other two." It is one of the neatest racing stories I know, and I am informed has a substratum of truth in it.

For years I attended the race meetings in the city with the greatest regularity, sometimes to my profit and sometimes the reverse. Melbourne was our Mecca at Cup time and a large number of South Australian sportsmen visited the eastern capital from Adelaide.

In the rush that takes place on a race day one sometimes gets into difficulties. I recollect on one occasion at a Birthday Cup meeting an old professional friend from Western Australia had been my guest. We ventured a pound or two



each on a horse in the Cup and were unfortunate enough to lose. As we were driving home he asked me to put £2 on the horse for him in the Alderman Cup, to be run later on. He was leaving that night by boat for the West. I undertook to do so.

I had a very successful day at the Alderman Cup meeting, and amongst my activities was a whole £5 note on the horse that he and I had previously backed in the Cup. Returning to my club in the evening, I suddenly remembered that I had forgotten to put his £2 on, but on the following Monday I wrote him a note and enclosed my cheque for the amount of the dividend, which was a pretty considerable lump, and ate into my winnings. My memory had not befriended me, and there was nothing to do but pay.

Another curious incident occurred at the Gawler races. My brother had trained a finely modelled Tostig horse up at his station and had written to me that he was taking him to the Gawler races, and thought he would run very well, and to come up prepared to back him. The horse was quite an unknown quantity and nobody took much notice of him. My brother told me to put £20 on him, and get it quietly on the tote so as not to attract attention. It was in the days before the electric totalisator and the tickets were taken out of boxes by hand. The horse was No. 12, and I quietly went to the £1 window and asked for ten tickets on No. 12. Tickets were handed to me, and as I retired I noticed that there were not that number of tickets on the number that I had asked for. I accordingly looked at the tickets, discovered that they were No. 13, and as nobody had approached the tote in the meantime, I induced the operator to change the tickets on to No. 12 and restore the tickets he had given me on No. 13 to their places. He very courteously did this and I wandered round and got the commission invested, including something for myself. The horse duly won and paid a £12 dividend. One has to keep his wits about him in such circumstances.

This Tostig horse had beautiful conformation; in short,



## SPORT

he was a model on top, but, like all the breed, was weak in the forelegs, and while winning the Baker Handicap during the first world war, put his foot in a small hole and broke his fetlock joint. The Tostig breed of horse had great pace and considerable staying power, and many of them were good jumpers.

On yet another occasion I backed a horse called Firepan with a bookmaker, who intercepted me on my way to the totalisator, and informed me he would lay me full tote odds. I had borrowed £3, as I had had a bad day, from a friend, and as I met the bookmaker I returned the £3 and told him I would have a fiver on Firepan. In those days a bookmaker was acting illegally in betting at all, and a number of them had a limit to the price. Firepan won and paid £19. The bookmaker desired to settle with me at his limit of £15 to one. I refused his settlement, and, as he was a member of Tattersall's Club, I had him brought before the committee, as members were in those days entitled to do, to settle the dispute. He was ordered to pay the amount at the totalisator price the horse had paid, and threw the money on the table in front of the chairman, who promptly remarked: "Pay with good grace, sir!"

During the drought years of 1914-15, the horses on my brother's station had to be sent to other properties to secure proper pasture for them, and amongst them was a Tostig filly. She was sent to Hergott Springs, and was running with a number of others out in the large paddocks. Some drover or other managed to catch her, and apparently fancied her, seeing that she was an animal of quality. She was not missed for many weeks, but she was finally discovered by the Queensland police well disguised, with brands mutilated, and ultimately was restored to my brother, who used her for breeding purposes.

I attended a race meeting at Broken Hill, my brother taking from the station for the Trial Stakes there a horse which he afterwards raced over hurdles. This was an unknown quantity, and we secured a very satisfactory price



from the ring. He won, and we had what might be regarded as a good killing. My brother's intention was to run him the following Wednesday in a longer race, in which he thought he would do better. On the Saturday morning we got a message from the trainer to come out to the stable at once. We drove out, and found the horse in great distress with what might be regarded as a kink in his neck. He could not straighten it, and was apparently in considerable pain. A veterinary surgeon was summoned, and relieved the animal to some extent. He had to be scratched for his engagements, as the infirmity, whatever it was, continued in a minor degree for some days. He must have caught a severe cold from the chill of travelling in the open truck, which was all that could be provided to take him from my brother's station to Broken Hill. Although he appeared to get all right, he failed to live up to expectations, and was used finally as a station hack.

My brother always had an ambition to win a cup. As I have already indicated in another part of this book, he invented the starting gate, and also advocated in the columns of "The Australasian"—the then leading sporting newspaper of Australia under an able editorship—that a method should be adopted of stewards moving round with the horses inside the track. He suggested an electric contraption for the purpose, but later on we find his idea applied in a somewhat different way—a motor car moves round on the inner track keeping pace with the horses, until the final stages of the race. This enables the stewards to watch very carefully the behaviour of the boys, and judge of the efforts of the horses.

All sorts of devices are supposed to be employed by men of doubtful character, who are associated with the racing world, but during a fairly long experience I never encountered any instance where it could be even suggested that either doping of the horse, or foul work in a race had been resorted to. There were incidents where men who were superior horsemen have opened up to let the less experienced boy endeavour to get the inside running, and then closed on



## SPORT

him as he was about to take it, but these are all things that the experienced jockey has to do if he is to succeed, and how well some of them did it, and how well they rode their mounts can be remembered by those who understood the racing game.

Horses have a peculiar disposition. I remember one huge stallion my brother owned, in which I had no interest—a great stayer and a well-bred horse. He had a mania for foals, and once he saw a mare with a foal in a paddock he was very difficult indeed to control. He was out one day and happened to get into a paddock where there were mares and foals. He rounded all the foals up and took possession of them, treating them with every consideration, and seemed quite happy in their company. As he had to be brought in, the trainer found great difficulty in getting him to relinquish control of the foals that he had entirely separated from their mothers. On another occasion, while being ridden from the track one morning, he encountered a mare and foal, and gave the boy who was riding him a really bad time in keeping him under control.

Serving as a sire on the station I saw him years afterwards, and when we approached him, he immediately rounded up all the mares, and stood as it were guard over them. He would jump a fence to get in with a foal, for he appeared to have an extraordinary affection for the young.

I had a curious experience as regards the South Australian Derby. My brother had engaged a horse of his own breeding sired by the Tostig horse figured in the Gawler incident. He gave every indication of being a true stayer, and my brother had him prepared for the South Australian Derby, and had hopes that he would win it. As my brother had to leave for Melbourne to attend the Spring Meeting, where he had horses engaged, he asked me to attend to the backing of his horse. The night before the Derby was run the trainer rang me up and said the horse had gone in one of his front legs—a typical performance for the Tostig blood—and that he was very concerned about it. He applied hot fomentations,



and on the following morning rang me to say that the horse, whose name was Poganotos, was a great deal better, and that he would bring him to the course and I could see him there, and we could decide whether to start him or not.

A strong boy had been engaged who had been severely criticised for riding a bad race the previous Saturday on the horse that was favourite for the Derby. I attended the course early, examined the horse's leg, and came to the conclusion—shared by the trainer—that he would probably break down in the race. Notwithstanding this, I said I thought the best thing to do would be to start him, as if he did not break down then he would break down later on, and the trainer pointed out that it was almost throwing money away to back him. I agreed. Judge of my amazement when he finished the Derby course full of running, and beat the favourite after a desperate struggle. He paid, of course, a specially good dividend, in which neither my brother nor myself shared. The jockey rode a most desperate finish, and was all smiles to have beaten the horse that he was supposed to have ridden badly on the previous occasion. I was able to wire my brother that he had won a Derby, but without profit.

Poganotos did not appear to be any worse after the race, but was turned out, and a well-known sporting enthusiast insisted on taking a lease of him with a view of winning the Adelaide Cup. He knew his weakness, but he said he had frequently prepared horses that had suffered in the same way. He brought him to Adelaide, and I have seldom seen a horse in better condition. The trouble in his legs had not manifested itself, and on looking him over I was struck by his excellent condition. A few days after I had seen him my brother informed me that his leg had gone after a working gallop at Morphettville. This was the end of his racing career, but he proved an excellent hack, and was the choice of all lady riders at my brother's station. Such are the vicissitudes in the racing world.

I became chairman of the Football League at the request



## SPORT

of the Council of that institution. We had an excellent secretary, and a sound body of men more or less devoted to the interests of their own particular clubs, but enthusiastic regarding the superiority of the Australian game. I joined in their enthusiasm because I believe the Australian game is the fastest and cleanest of all football games. I presided at the meetings of the Council, and tried offences by players against the rules which were reported by the umpires. Some were very trivial, but occasionally a serious charge was laid, and I remember very well the disqualification I imposed on a player for a period that would keep him out of the semi-finals in which his team was entitled to play.

I had an illustration of the popularity of the game on this occasion. There was a tremendous amount of publicity, and a great deal of criticism levelled at myself for inflicting the punishment—which I still regard as well deserved—upon this player who was a first-class man, but who in a moment of impetuosity had dashed the ball into the central umpire's face. This could not be tolerated.

I was waited upon by a deputation consisting of mayors, by King's Counsel, and by all manner of people, in an endeavour to get me to reduce the sentence. I listened to all that they had to say. There was really nothing new brought forward, and the disqualification stood. It is all to the benefit of this type of sport that it should be kept free from incidents which may be regarded as a species of ruffianism. This serves to indicate the remarkable popularity of the game, and the loyalty of the individual district to its own particular team.

The secretary told me a good story of one of my predecessors. He was then a club secretary. Part of his duty was defending a man who had been charged with an assault upon another player. He put up a wonderful defence, overpowering, in fact, in his opinion, only to find that the chairman not only found his man guilty, but gave him a pretty stiff punishment. The secretary told me that years afterwards, having come in close contact with their chairman in



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

certain business relationships, he asked him for an explanation of his conclusions. "Well," said the chairman, "contrary to all practices I went to see that game, and was standing immediately opposite where the other player was assaulted by the man who had been accused." The secretary thought this was an excellent answer, and said no more, but there was a tradition that the chairman should not attend, but simply be guided by the evidence that was produced, and, except for the final games to determine the premiership of the season, I rarely attended, and consoled myself by a visit to the racecourse.

On one occasion we entertained certain judicial dignitaries at the instance of a professional friend. One of them watched the game with considerable interest, and, after some light refreshment, strolled up and down in front of the box reserved for myself and visitors. I judged by his appearance he was not enjoying it too much, and ventured to remark on what a fast, clean game the Australian game was. I suddenly remembered that he was interested in Rugby. He turned on me, and said: "Yes, it is fast enough, but there is too much damn whistle." Certainly the whistle was used very frequently that afternoon, but I realised how he preferred the scrum to the fleet-footed game we play in Australia.

On my election to the Senate I perforce had to resign the chairmanship, but the post was filled by one who afterwards became a member of the Supreme Court Bench.

I had a great love for rifle shooting, but my interest, after I had relinquished the command of the Scottish Corps, was so devoted to racing, and my time was so fully occupied, that I did not follow up, and finally lost all association. I always thought rifle clubs should be encouraged and supported by the Government. Many countries had given them full support, and Germany in particular produced a number of first-class marksmen.

Such are a few extracts from my life in sport. My interest took one's mind off the more serious affairs that arose in one's professional life. It was a sort of refresher to have an



## SPORT

afternoon either at racing or at football, and I feel that the large following that football gets in this country, as well as in England, is due to the fact that the population as a whole want some mental relief from their every-day work that will take their minds right away from their employment, be it mental or physical. In fact, it is a sort of mental rest, and perhaps also a physical rest.



## POLITICS

FEELING my position fairly well assured and my practice developing along satisfactory lines, I decided, in 1922, to endeavour to secure a seat in the Senate. Frequently the question has been asked me why I relinquished what a number of my friends regarded as a promising career at the Bar. Shortly, the position was this. As far back as 1914 I discussed with Sir Samuel Way, then Chief Justice, a suggestion that he had made to me that I should come up, in other words that I should take silk. He suggested that I should send him a list of the more prominent cases in which I had been engaged during my 20 years of practice. Having considered the matter carefully, I saw no risk and possibly some gain in going to the Senior Bar. I accordingly made application.

Appointments in South Australia to the Inner Bar are made on the recommendation of the Chief Justice of the State. Sir Samuel Way was stricken down, and I saw him only once again, when he told me that he would deal with the matter on his return to the court. He never returned.

His successor was Sir George Murray, and as I did not desire to have my application discussed by all and sundry, I personally saw him in regard to the matter, when he somewhat curtly informed me that he did not approve of applications for silk, but he assured me there was nothing against me in my professional career. There the thing had to stand, but I felt somewhat embarrassed, partly by the fact that I was charging the fees of a leader, although I was really only a junior member of the South Australian Bar. I was, therefore, perturbed at being informed on very excellent authority that the Chief Justice had definitely indicated that he would



## POLITICS

never appoint myself and one other, who shall be nameless, to the Inner Bar.

I did not know what I had done or left undone, but I somehow sensed hostility in the air, and feared that it might be visited, probably unjustly, on those I represented. I did my best to keep my cases out of the Chief Justice's list, and appeared before him as rarely as I could. I learned that I was personally distasteful to him, notwithstanding an association in the past that had been quite pleasant before he ascended the Bench, and, without divulging my real reasons to anyone, I determined, with a suitable opening, to enter the Federal arena. In justice to one who has gone, I will say this, that on no occasion did I feel that his judgment had been warped by any personal hostility to myself when I appeared before him, but the lurking fear was there.

The opportunity came to get into Federal politics, and I took it. In my earlier days, I had taken a very lively interest in politics. As indicated earlier, I had, at 23 years of age, stood for the District of Victoria, and, looking back over the effort I made, I appear to have put up a pretty good fight. The press were kind in those days. They reported you verbatim at the various leading centres, and, scanning my speeches after a lifelong experience, I find that in basic principles I have not materially altered my views. I stood mainly for clean politics. I stood for many radical reforms, some of which I have since seen given effect to. Race improvement loomed large in my speeches, and I quoted Burke in profusion.

I appear to have spoken on more than one occasion for over an hour-and-a-half, answered hundreds of questions, quoted poetry extensively, and towards the end of the campaign I was honoured with tremendous audiences. However, the electors did me a service by rejecting me by a considerable majority.

I recognise now that, although the party machines were not so rigidly bound as in our later day politics, the ticket scored, and as I had no ticket, I was defeated. I returned,



of course, to my practice at Petersburg, and joined Mr. Kingston, as I have already indicated.

On Kingston's death in 1908 there was a vacancy for the Federal seat. The Labour Party had made the selection of Mr. E. A. Roberts, who was then Chairman of the United Labour Party. The selection was unpopular in labour circles. He had resigned from the State Parliament, and there was considerable friction concerning his selection. I was attending a dinner at a private house and amongst those present were some members of the National League. Conversation turned on to politics, and I told them plainly that if they ran a good sporting man they could win the Adelaide seat, as Roberts was undoubtedly unpopular, and his selection not approved of by a large number of the rank and file. They asked me for suggestions, and I gave them the name of a prominent Adelaide citizen and sportsman. It appears he was not personally agreeable to them, and I was approached and asked if I would stand. Having consulted my partner, I agreed to do so.

There was a strenuous fight, and it appeared at one stage as if I were likely to win, but Roberts ultimately prevailed with a majority of 234 in a pretty heavy poll. The battle was fought with every weapon available. One's character was traduced, the sectarian question was used both ways. The vote of the Destitute Asylum really turned the day. Mr. Roberts beat me there by 154 votes, and, as there was some doubt concerning some of the votes that were recorded, there was a pretty close examination, and it was found that 80 dead men had voted!

In the meantime, Mr. Roberts had improved his relationship with the Labour Party, and, when the election occurred in 1910, he had an overwhelming majority, defeating me by nearly 4,000 votes.

I regard my defeat in 1908 as providential. I could never have held the Adelaide seat against a popular Labour representative.



## POLITICS

There were several political parties in South Australia in the early 1900's. Labour was feeling its way from about 1894 onwards. In the country districts we used to see very moderate and usually pleasant gentlemen carrying the Labour banner. I frequently wondered what political principles they stood for, and I came to the final conclusion that they were simply minions of the Trades Union movement, and not spokesmen for a really political principle of any kind. So far as one could deduce, the only thing in the way of a political principle they seemed to indicate was that they were moderate socialists.

With regard to Socialism, I do not think I could express my view concerning it in more appropriate terms than that great Labour leader, Samuel Gompers, expressed himself in at a conference—"Socialism holds nothing but unhappiness for the human race. It destroys personal initiative, wipes out national pride—the hearthstone of a people's culture—and finally it plays into the hands of the autocrats. One has only to watch its ravages on the human soul—the soul without a country—to know that Socialism is the fad of fanatics, the sophistry of so-called intelligentsia, and it has no place in the hearts of those who would secure and fight for freedom and preserve democracy."

Gompers was a realist and a humanitarian as well.

I had come to the conclusion that these Labour candidates whom we used to see were animated by no real political principle at all, and obtained their backing from those who desired to take from those who had and give to those who had not. They always wanted something to tilt at.

The Legislative Council of South Australia had a somewhat restricted franchise. This body was a veritable cockshy, just as the banks to-day are the windmill for the quixotics in another sphere. These always found some reason for explaining the inevitable grades in society, in wealth, and even in intelligence.

Although I was of a more radical disposition, and was a



member of a Liberal and Democratic League, I gradually felt the pressure of this huge body on the body politic. They regimented the Trades Union movement as a solid phalanx of voters, and it became necessary to form one opposing party which stood for some principle, and which was not exclusively conservative.

I assisted in the formation of what was then known as the Liberal Union, which absorbed the National League, the Liberal and Democratic League, but could not get the Country Party, which was a separate organisation, into line.

The Liberal Union was very successful in regimenting the electoral machine, and, although I became its second President, on the death of Senator J. H. Vardon, I found the position complicated by the fact that the Country Party, who were our natural allies, stood apart. Then, when the Labour Party split, and some sections formed a National Party, I ultimately obtained their inclusion in the Liberal Union as the Liberal Federation. The Country Party were almost willing to link up, but strong opposition from influential quarters inside the Liberal Union prevented my attaining that much-desired end. It was to come, however. Gradually, as the tariff policy of this country settled itself for good or ill along certain lines, the major difficulties of the Union disappeared, and to-day the old Liberal Union rejoices in the name of Liberal and Country League.

I made no serious effort to enter the political arena until 1922, when I was selected for the Senate. There were three teams in the field, two retiring Liberals and myself, three Labour men and three members of the National Party. The campaign for the Senate is a strenuous business, and it appeared as if the Liberal team had a fair chance of winning. The Nationalist Party, with some 23,400 votes, and Labour, 65,000, stood against our 44,000. Of the Nationalist vote, Labour obtained 5,000, as against my 20,000, but still it was enough, and the three Labour men were elected.



## POLITICS

My defeat on this occasion was somewhat of a disappointment. I had run several campaigns as a candidate for the State District of Adelaide, largely with a view of keeping the electors on the Adelaide roll and not allowing them to enrol in the neighbouring districts, where the numbers were close, but where the Liberal Party usually had a majority. In the District of Adelaide, Labour had votes to spare, and by judicious transfer could endanger some safe Liberal seats in the neighbourhood.

One had a great deal of fun in these campaigns, but, apart from the 1908 sally for the Federal seat, I never expected to be returned, and really never desired to be returned, but in 1922 I would have welcomed relief from my surroundings.

The interstate press had been hinting at suggestions of my appointment to the Inner Bar. How they originated I neither knew nor cared, for I knew it was not to be. I had gone overseas in 1925 for what I considered to be a well-earned holiday. While at Lyons, in France, when I was preparing for a tour of the Riviera with my wife and a party, I received a cable asking me if I would return, as an election was contemplated. It was somewhat of a disappointment, but it was either now or never. I accordingly cabled back I was returning immediately. We caught the boat at Toulon, but owing to the British seamen's strike we were allowed to land neither in Fremantle nor Port Adelaide and were brought on to Melbourne, whence I caught a train and was from then on immersed in a strenuous campaign. There was a Labour team, of course, two Liberals and a Country Party candidate were grouped, and Sir Victor Wilson, who had been rejected by the Country Party through some unfortunate misunderstanding, made the campaign somewhat difficult. Machine politics ultimately triumphed and Sir John Newlands was elected to the first vacancy, I was elected to the second, and the Country Party representative to the third. We had comfortable majorities.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

The way was now open to take my seat in the Senate in the following July, when, by the resignation of Senator Benny, I was appointed by the State Parliament to fill the vacancy as from the 24th January, 1926.

I was fortunate enough to find a Government in office with whose policy I was almost in complete agreement, and within seven months I was offered an honorary ministership to discharge the functions of the Attorney-General, who was proceeding abroad. Such rapid preferment is unusual, and at times does not operate to one's advantage. I recollect a Labour man, after my retirement from the Government in 1938, who appeared very dissatisfied at the selection of the Cabinet formed by Mr. Curtin. He had not long been in Parliament. I told him that it was the best thing that ever happened to him, that his deferment would take the sense of jealousy out of his colleagues. I judged that he was not altogether satisfied with the point of view I held, but I have no doubt that my point of view is right, and I speak from a long experience.

I found the atmosphere of the Senate somewhat different from that which I expected. Speeches seemed to wander away from the point that was under discussion.

Readers may think that I have some prejudice against the Labour Party. I have this firm belief, that so long as their platform and their policy are controlled by the Trades Union movement they will be hampered in their attitude; in short, they will not govern, but be governed. There are many men in their ranks for whom one has personally a high regard, and two events spring to my mind of the behaviour of two Labour men in responsible positions that betokened the innate honesty of the individuals and the desire to do the right thing.

On one occasion I was retained in an endeavour to settle a huge piece of litigation between the South Australian Government and a contractor. The instructions came from another large firm who had agreed to finance the contractor



## POLITICS

in a new contract, provided that he could eliminate litigation between himself and the South Australian Government. The papers were in the hands of another firm. Their costs were paid and the whole transaction placed in my firm's hands. After considerable negotiation extending over months with the Crown Solicitor and the Honourable T. Price, who was Premier and Commissioner of Public Works, terms which were satisfactory to my client were agreed to, and a short memorandum was drawn up embodying the terms of settlement between the Crown and the contractor. These were signed on a sheet of foolscap by the Minister and the contractor. My client, through some negligence in his office, apparently had omitted to inform me of the liability to the Railway Commissioner of some thousands of pounds. One morning shortly afterwards Mr. Price rang me up and said he wanted to meet the Crown Solicitor and myself and would like my client to come along. I left my client sitting in the outer office and went in to see the Premier. He had with him the Crown Solicitor, and informed me that he had just sent for the Attorney-General. I asked him what was troubling him. He said: "The Railway Commissioner has just been in and says he is not the Crown and that he does not propose to be bound by the agreement." I said I knew nothing of the liability to the Railway Commissioner, but that the agreement intended to settle all matters between us. The Attorney-General had arrived on the scene. I went out to my client and informed him of the position. He was overcome. I can remember the beads of perspiration that broke out on his brow. I refrained from rebuking him for the negligence of his staff in not properly informing us of the position. He was summoned to Mr. Price's room, and his anxiety was very obvious. Mr. Price turned on him and said: "What did you understand by this?" He said: "I understood that all claims on either side were to be relinquished and that I should be paid so much for plant which I was abandoning to the Government." Turning to the Attorney-General and the



Crown Solicitor, Mr. Price said: "I think we had better start again. Give me your copy of the memorandum," he said to me. He put them together and he said: "Attorney, whatever the law is, the right thing to do is to start afresh," and he promptly burnt both copies. We started afresh, with happy results to my client.

There was a humanity and honesty about the action of the Premier that made a strong appeal.

The other instance was of a more personal character, and concerned the late Senator Barnes. For the short period that I was in opposition in the Senate, and the Scullin Government in office, Senator Barnes was leading the Senate. He introduced a Bill and made his second reading speech on it on the Friday afternoon. The adjournment was obtained by the Leader of the Opposition. The Senate then rose, and, as I found I would be unable until the following Thursday to make a speech on the measure, I went into Senator Barnes' room, where he had been entertaining some friends, and asked him if he would arrange for the Bill's discussion to continue over the following Thursday, so that I could take the adjournment and make my speech on that day. He agreed to this. Judge of my amazement when on my return to the Senate I found the debate on the measure was almost completed. I sent a chit to Senator Barnes by one of the messengers reminding him of his promise. The messenger returned and said the Senator wanted to see me. I went round. We held a whispered conversation scarcely in Parliamentary language, and he turned on me at last and said: "Did you say I promised you that adjournment?" I said: "You did, Jack, but I think you have forgotten it." He said: "If you say so, it is enough for me. I will get the Bill pulled off until to-morrow," and he did.

Although somewhat embarrassed, I was called upon when attending his funeral in an official capacity to say a few words over his grave, and I think the quotation from Ken-



## POLITICS

dall's "Ode to Gordon," which I then made, was most appropriate:—

" . . . The brave, great soul,  
That never told a lie or turned aside  
To fly from danger—he, as I say, was one  
Of that bright company this sin-stained world  
Can ill afford to lose."

I think it touched some of those present.

John Barnes' word was his bond. He had settled many a score of industrial disputes by arguing the matter out, as he once told me, sometimes getting away from his surroundings, either in the stable, or even as he put it, on the dunghill. The manner in which he used to endeavour to saddle us of the Liberal Party with the responsibility of supporting the gentlemen he referred to as the "Coms." was amazing. He did this with a twinkle in his eye.

Another member of the party once suggested to me that we should frame a new arbitration measure. He said he felt confident that we could accomplish some good. We exchanged some ideas, and when I pointed out to him that that was what the Bruce-Page Government had in mind, he simply laughed and said: "We managed to inoculate the people with the idea that you were about to abolish arbitration and hence our overwhelming victory in 1929." He played the political game according to his lights.

I had a considerable knowledge of the inner working of the party system during my presidency of the Liberal Union, but knowledge so gained scarcely familiarises you with what arises in the Parliamentary room.

I shall never forget a tribute paid to me by a retiring Senator of the Opposition Party. He said: "As a Senator and a man, Senator McLachlan may possibly be equalled, but he has no superior."

Having regard to the many criticisms and attacks made upon the Government by myself and my colleagues, I



could not help feeling flattered at the parting speech of one who had suffered at our hands.

Parliament is like a huge school. It has its good boys and its bad boys; it has its cunning boys and its candid boys, but the ear of the average politician is very close to the ground. He endeavours to gauge popular feeling.

In politics you frequently find men doing a thing which in ordinary business or private life they would scorn. I remember on one occasion receiving a deputation of members on behalf of a well-known citizen of a distant State who had got into some difficulty regarding a mineral claim and was very anxious to get help and guidance—if not something more—from the Federal Government. He was brought to me as Minister in Charge of Development, accompanied by various Senators and Members of all parties. I heard the story and observed the distress in which the individual was, and this distress was very marked, due to the fact that he had broken or injured one of his legs while prospecting on his property. Officially I could do nothing, but I casually mentioned that the only firms I knew who took any interest in his product were two Australian companies. Of one of these companies I was a director, but had not the slightest notion whether the material was of any real value or not. My one desire was to help the old chap. I was thanked and the deputation withdrew.

Judge of my amazement when the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives based a question to the Prime Minister on the fact that I had mentioned the name of this company as a probable purchaser of the material. Every other member but the one who was guilty of tattling called on me personally to assure me that they were not responsible. It was an illustration, however, of what I regarded as the smallness of the individual and I have long since forgiven him.

Many of the members take enjoyment in simply baiting the Minister in charge of the Bill, and without any sincerity in their criticism proceed to argue and debate along most



## POLITICS

untenable lines. When there is no urgency to get through with the business of Parliament, a certain amount of diversion is not only excusable, but one even at times enjoys it, but when the matter is urgent and of a serious character, one can scarcely appreciate conduct that simply conduces to delay.

On my entry into Parliament I found the atmosphere very different from that of the courts in which I had practised for so long. There was an air of langour, and while some attention was undoubtedly given to the speeches of members, one found the chamber very often quite full, but unless the matter was of great interest, paying little attention to what fell even from the lips of Ministers.

I took my seat and waited for a suitable opportunity to address the Senate. It came, and after a few minutes I found myself perfectly at home. The chamber was full and attentive. I was a new man, and they wanted to observe what manner of man I was. I left them in little doubt as to where I stood. As is customary, my first effort was received in silence, except for the round of "Hear, hears" as I rose, and a repetition of the only form of applause permitted in Parliament at the conclusion.

As a private Senator one's duties were light. I criticised a Bill for a grant to the State of Western Australia, and my criticism was founded on facts concerning tremendous losses which were being made in, I think, a sawmill and some other factory run by the Government of that State. It appeared to me to be entirely unsound for a State to embark on extravagances in manufacture, and then come cap in hand for the taxpayers of Australia to foot the bill.

Constitutional reform and financial reform were in the air. Ideas were current for the improvement of the working of the Commonwealth arbitration scheme. In the main, I shared the ideas of the Government and did not hesitate to voice my approval.

One amusing incident occurred which gave me an insight into Parliamentary methods. A distinguished colleague had



arrived from South Australia for a temporary stay in the Senate. A Tariff Bill had come up, increasing the duty on imported whisky pretty considerably. I and several others on the Government's side were strongly against this increase, and some of the Opposition were quite in sympathy with us. As my colleague from South Australia was well versed in Parliamentary procedure, he handled a suggestion for a reduction of the duty and we anticipated that we had the numbers to send the suggestion back to the House of Representatives. Heads were counted, and we had a majority of one.

As I returned from the refreshment rooms that evening I observed that the Minister of Customs had one of our supporters bailed up in a corner and was impressing upon him something with considerable fervour and forcefulness. I passed by to the club-room, and in my innocence thought no more of the matter. The business came on fairly late in the evening, and we were defeated, owing to the absence of the gentleman who had been cornered by the Minister of Customs. Next morning, as a fellow-Senator and myself were reading the morning press in the club-room, he arrived and immediately informed us that he had had a violent attack of lumbago and had to remain at his quarters. He put his round and I felt that he was offering an excuse for his neglect to honour his promise to vote against the increased duties.

It was a Friday and the Senate adjourned early to enable interstate members to catch their trains. The Whip and a very congenial junior Minister cordially invited us to a ministerial room for a game of bridge and a cup of tea. We accepted, and the Minister, complaining that he himself had an attack of lumbago, I promptly informed him in a most serious tone that it was catching. They loudly repudiated my suggestion, but I stoutly maintained it, and said that I could prove it, because a certain Senator had caught it from the Minister of Customs the previous evening. Although there was loud laughter, I felt I had hit the nail on the





*Author's Wife.*





*Author's Grandmother.*



*H. P. McLachlan, Brother of the Author.*



## POLITICS

head. Such are the incidents of Parliamentary life when the exigencies make it necessary to employ measures that are not regarded in some circles as orthodox.

I returned to my Adelaide surroundings each weekend and was able to engage to a limited extent in the practice of my profession.

I was somewhat amazed and flattered when in August, 1926, I was asked by the Prime Minister if I would join the Cabinet as an Honorary Minister and do the work of the then Attorney-General during his absence abroad. This was rapid promotion, but I felt that, as I was in almost complete harmony with the views and policy of the Bruce-Page Government on all major matters, I was justified in taking the step. I accordingly saw Mr. Bruce, and after a few days' delay, owing to the absence of the Governor-General in Western Australia, I was sworn in. This necessitated my continued absence from South Australia for much lengthier periods. Our first Cabinet meeting took place in Sydney, where Sir Earle Page acted as Prime Minister.

The press of the country appeared to acclaim my appointment. Certainly the press of South Australia did, and made extraordinarily flattering references to my elevation.

The Sydney "Sun" was courteous and voiced a paragraph under date of 7th September, 1926, which I subjoin: "Of the new batch of Senators coming to their appointed places a couple of months ago, the one who appeared to me easiest in his manner was Alexander John McLachlan, who only got there through the troubles of one of the original elect. Presently his stalwart figure uprose from the seats back of the Ministry's representatives and he delivered himself of some of the best-moulded phrases and the clearest diction followers of the Senate's doings have listened to in a long while. He made a real impression in his speeches on the Cotton Bounties Bill and on the last measures of the pre-referendum sitting. I'm not so surprised as I would have been otherwise by his sudden leap into Ministerial responsibility."



The Sydney "Herald" on the 15th September was courteous in the extreme. The "Western Australian" on the 11th September made equally flattering references: "It was mentioned in these despatches a few weeks ago that one of the recruits to Federal Parliament who seemed to have a political career ahead was Senator McLachlan of South Australia. His chance has come sooner than the most ambitious politician would dare to hope. A very much weakened Cabinet was left without a legal man to advise on the knotty problems that may crop up. South Australia, owing to the Cabinet changes, was left without a Minister. Mr. Bruce remedied both defects at one stroke by making Senator McLachlan Acting Attorney-General. No instance can be recalled in which a Senator or member took a seat in Cabinet in nine months after being elected for the first time. The new Senator and new Acting Minister is a big man physically. He is one of our few bearded Senators, and has a speaking voice proportional to his stature. An eminent legal man in Adelaide, he is a practised speaker and did not have to battle against that self-consciousness which often oppresses newcomers in politics in their first few years. This is probably only his first step up."

On the return of the Prime Minister and the Attorney-General, I expected to relinquish my duties, but at the request of the Prime Minister I agreed to continue to serve. The Attorney-General had returned, and I became a sort of offsider to the Prime Minister, taking the work of any Minister who was either ill or absent.

Our removal to Canberra was in the air. Parliament House was finished, hotels had been built and certain secretariats erected.

The opening of Parliament at Canberra was decided upon and we were informed that His Majesty the King had approved of the Duke of York performing the opening ceremony. The Royal party toured the various States, and I was Minister in attendance during their tour of the Western District and subsequent visit to Adelaide. Canberra



## POLITICS

was agog, and the ceremony was duly performed. Dignitaries from the whole of Australia attended. Melba's voice rang through the assembled throng with its thrilling notes. Dignitaries from the Dominions, the Motherland and elsewhere graced the proceedings. Although the capital was unfinished in construction, various devices were resorted to to make things appear other than they were. Unfortunately, on the night of our departure for the south and for the general break-up of the assembled visitors, a violent thunderstorm ensued, interrupting all the lighting arrangements in the various hotels and private homes and causing considerable inconvenience, in fact panic, to the ladies in packing their furbelows.

It was a worthy occasion I think. It marked as it were the apex of nationhood for the Australian people, and, while it may have been just a trifle premature, pressure from various centres was so strong that it could not be further delayed.

Members of both Houses are inclined to segregate themselves and mostly associate with other members of their own party. Each party has its own room and there is a very small interchange of visits. Even in the dining-room members of the various parties usually share the same table, and I frequently wondered whether this failure to associate was a good thing, but the line seems to be drawn more definitely as the years go by.

One curious incident served, to my mind, to mark the narrowness of this point of view. I had occasion to entertain by way of showing our respect for a departing member, who for years stood high in the councils of his country and rendered tremendous service. It was fitting that this recognition should be made. I accordingly arranged for a dinner, and, having some qualms as to the attitude the Opposition might adopt, I consulted one of their leaders as to whether I should extend the invitations to the members of his party. He indicated his regret, but he said: "You know what my fellows are." I therefore confined the invitations to mem-



bers of my own and the Country Party, who worked in fairly close association with each other.

It is regrettable that politics obtrude themselves in this country into amenities such as I have outlined. Discussion need not be carried on, although it frequently is, in a spirit of the most biased bitterness, and this apparently extends to the every-day association of members.

There are, of course, exceptions, but you never know whether you are held in high personal regard by your opponents. They appear to think their job in life is to oppose, and to oppose with bitterness. The drawing of tight party lines tends to intensify this class of thing, and I sometimes wonder whether Australia is not heading towards that class of party-ism which has proved so prevalent in France and so disastrous to that country.

It may be that the bitterness to which I have referred has its foundations in the growth, or the manner of growth, of what is now the Labour Party. Antagonism is fostered by certain Trades' Union leaders. They fail to recognise that a nation is made up of, and its future depends on, a conglomeration of workers of various descriptions operating in various calls of life. The parties give lip service to freedom and the ultimate objective, if carried into effect, would simply be the death of freedom as we know it in Australia and in the British world.

I recollect that when I was a very young man and still in my articles a French economist was interviewed in this country and amongst many striking things he said that Australia would live to rue the day that the railways were nationally owned. As one who had never known any other than a national system, I was struck with this observation, but he had a prevision far greater than mine and his words are to-day proving only too true.

One wonders when all our basic industries are socialised, or nationalised, as we are pleased to term it, where the revenues are to come from to discharge our obligations to the aged and to the infirm, and where the fund is to be



## POLITICS

found to pay those social benefits so properly bestowed upon deserving people. No socialist industry, unless it be a monopoly, can be made to pay. The Government stroke abounds in most of the industries. It is really the absence of incentive that causes this, and those who are deriving social benefits from the Crown to-day have every cause to ponder concerning the theory of socialisation.

At the moment we live in an atmosphere of great prosperity and an abundance of foodstuffs. Australia's future depends, as it always has depended, on its primary production. The Atlantic Charter, now in the backwash of international politics, breathed principles which were inherently sound and which would have left Australia to develop along lines based on its superiority in the production of the natural product upon which alone its secondary industries could depend—our wool, steel and iron ore, an abundance of coal, our fruits and our fish, and also our livestock, including the cattle industry. We grow the best fruit in the world, and do, to an extent, produce as good a jam and fruit conserve as any country in the world.

Water is the great necessity, and the conservation of water is imperative for Australia's future development. Those who think of Australia and its future development should read Theodore Lathrop Stoddart's "Rising Tide of Colour." I studied it as a young man. Australia must be strong and must have friendly neighbours. The Dominion of New Zealand is a lonely ally and sparsely populated. India and the better-class Indians will probably always remain the allies of Britain and the Dominions. The myriads of the north may or may not prove friendly. Japan for the time being has no danger in its make-up to this continent, but fifty years' time may tell another story. We know how powerful Japan became in less than half a century.

So we must look westward to our own Motherland and eastward to our cousins in the western hemisphere. Whatever the difficulties may be of international finance, whether the centre should be New York or London, is a matter of



small moment. It is the welfare of the whole community that should be considered in preference to pride of race or pride of purse.

Our handful of people have acquitted themselves in the testing touch of war with credit on sea and land and in the air. Weapons of new destruction are not only already talked of, but have been tested, and the future should ensure that the Commonwealth of British Nations, linked up with the peace-loving United States, is in the forefront. Nations are just being born and are beginning to recognise their nationhood by reason of their great numbers. Their living standards, notwithstanding the tremendous efforts of the International Labour Office, are still a menace to the standards of the more civilised peoples. Backward nations as we have known them are rapidly becoming industrialised and will seek an outlet for their production. I have always feared that, unless some method can be devised to equalise the standards of living, friction must follow, and from friction war must ensue.

A grave responsibility rests on the shoulders of leaders to-day. The League of Nations has gone, and the creation that was made to displace it appears to be already tottering.



## THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THE Government appointed me to attend the League of Nations' Conference in 1928, and, accompanied by my wife, I sailed overseas. While on shipboard, with the assistance of a well-informed secretary, I made myself familiar with the salient points of discussion and with the principles that had been laid down by my Cabinet.

I arrived in London and made, of course, the proper official calls, amongst whom ranked the Foreign Secretary, Sir Austen Chamberlain, who received me with a most delightful informality and charmed me with his pleasantness and urbanity. He regretted that I had spent so much time on board ship swotting up the work ahead, and said that my wife and I must dine with them one night and he would give me all the points that really mattered in a talk after dinner. This was not to be, however, because a few days after seeing him the malady from which he was suffering became so acute as to necessitate his abandonment of the leadership of the delegation to the League and Lord Cushenden was appointed in his place.

In the meantime the Kellogg Pact came forward. This Pact was to outlaw war, and at the instance of the Australian Government I was appointed plenipotentiary under a Royal Commission from His Majesty to sign the Pact on behalf of Australia. In due course we proceeded to Paris, and the delegations of the many countries who subscribed, or agreed to subscribe to this Pact, assembled from all quarters of the globe.

I felt it somewhat curious that at such a stage this Pact should be brought to light, but gleaned that Briand, that great Frenchman, had negotiated it, and induced Mr.



Kellogg, of America, who was a strong League of Nations protagonist, to father it in America. It apparently had a dual purpose, but I have no doubt that the shrewd mind of Briand was realising that the League was failing and was unlikely to provide that security for which the French had clamoured, and were still clamouring aloud, and that a declaration outlawing war by all the nations might prove a buttress to a crumbling League of Nations. The second reason was probably that Briand, with his agile mind, thought that it would draw America more closely into the field of European politics. These reasons have manifested themselves to me in subsequent years, but the clamour and the interest on the Continent left one amazed. Receptions, social functions, banquets, luncheons abounded. As the guests of the French Government, my wife and myself were fêted, and at the banquet given by Mr. and Mrs. Kellogg at the Embassy I had the privilege of meeting a real pro-British American in the person of Mr. Herrick, the Ambassador.

Talking to me in private, he made a remark that I have never forgotten. He said: "You are going to the League of Nations?" I said: "Yes." "There is only one League of Nations," he said. "It is not the one you mean: it is the League of Nations of the British-speaking races." He was charming and he was candid. He was one of those who, having decided he could give his confidence, gave it, and gave it freely.

The French people treated the occasion with some seriousness, and I remember full well the cheers that greeted Dr. Stresemann, the representative of Germany, as he moved round the horseshoe-shaped table to sign the Pact. From thousands of voices in the surrounding arena cheers went to the heavens. The multitudes thought here at last is the end of the enmity between these two great European races and voiced their approval and their appreciation in the most unmistakable manner.



## THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

The reception of the other delegates was kindly, but lacked the vigour and the acclaim that was accorded to Dr. Stresemann.

A huge pen was provided, with a precious stone in the top, and Mr. Mackenzie King, who had preceded me in moving round the huge enclosure to sign the Pact, warned me as I rose to "watch out for the pen; it wobbles over." Somewhat embarrassed and with a trembling hand I seized the pen, to find that the enormous jewel in its head left it quite out of balance and almost unmanageable. I placed my signature on the Pact and attached the seal which had been specially provided.

A somewhat curious incident arose concerning the pen. An eminent American who had held office in the United States was spending his declining years in Paris. He was the possessor of a quill made from the wing of an eagle, "La quill," which had signed a patent convention between nations many years before. He had impressed upon the French Government the desirability of using this pen to have the Pact signed by the various delegates. With that politeness and finesse which characterise the French, the Government apparently provided a large sum in francs to the mayor and people of Havre, where Mr. Kellogg had landed, to provide him with a Havre pen, which was the weapon placed in our hands with which to execute the vital document.

A few days later I was called upon by the American gentleman. He explained who he was, produced a large steel cylinder containing this much-prized eagle's quill, and asked me if I would be good enough to execute a duplicate of the Pact with the quill, as he had determined to preserve the continuity of execution. I pointed out to him that it was rather unfitting that a Pact outlawing war should be executed by a quill from the most warlike of birds. He smiled and I signed, and I noticed all the others who preceded me had also signed his copy of the Pact. He was delighted and proceeded on his way, quill and Pact



in hand, to procure the other signatures. The incident serves to illustrate the diplomatic mind of the French.

We lunched with the President at Rambouillet, and had many pleasant talks with distinguished Frenchmen and others from all countries. The man that made the strongest impression upon me was Poincaré. He spoke in fluent English, and impressed me with his seriousness, his grasp and his determination. Briand, of whom I saw a great deal at Geneva, was the nation's orator. Perhaps not as flowery as Paul Boncour, but nevertheless of an extraordinarily logical habit of thought, his speeches carried the air of tremendous sincerity, and he seemed to feel every thought he expressed. Here, and later at Geneva, I heard him often, and, although my French was very rusty, he was so logical, and he was dealing with matters with which I was so familiar, that I was usually able to follow him in his native tongue.

The official banquet was a gorgeous affair and I felt somewhat relieved at the conclusion of the ceremonies. Lord Cushenden was a shrewd and observant politician. He called all the Dominion and British delegates together one morning and suggested that we might terminate our official visit at an earlier date than was planned by the French Government. He pointed out that the French Government must be paying an enormous sum for our accommodation and that there was really nothing further official to stay for after the reception at the Hotel de Ville, which was to take place the following day. We all agreed.

I liked my quarters at the Crillon and, as I dined there that evening, I got my secretary to get the directeur, as he was called, to see me. I invited him to have a cognac with us and explained to him that after the ceremony on Wednesday I should like to terminate my official stay at his hotel, but that I should like to keep my quarters on for my personal use for a few days longer at my own expense. I



## THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

said I would dine in the woods on Wednesday night and would "die" officially that evening. He promptly rejoined, in excellent English: "And we shall resurrect monsieur on Thursday morning." It was all arranged, and, as I had to visit the country as far as Orléans, my wife had every attention at the hotel.

The directeur had a wonderful memory. He asked after various Australians who had stayed there. He remembered Mr. Watt on his visit there and a number of others from overseas, and particularly Australians. A dinner was ordered for the woods on the Wednesday night. There was a band in attendance, and I managed by judicious expenditure to have Scottish music played, much to the amazement apparently of a number of others who were dining in adjoining rooms.

All this was in 1928, and when I remember that within eleven years nations were at each other's throats, I realise how futile all documents are unless the will for peace prevails in the hearts and minds of men. As the Kaiser inferred in 1914, they are only scraps of paper.

We proceeded to Geneva a few days before the assembly met and I made the rounds customary under the circumstances. A luncheon here, a chat there, and I began to feel that Geneva was not what it pretended to be. It was political, it was national, when it should have been international, for a delegate apparently thought and voted as would benefit his own country. I write too broadly, because there were a few men there who were really imbued with the spirit of the League, who sought only the welfare of mankind, and who were even prepared to subordinate the welfare of their individual nations in the interests of world peace. They were few in number, but they were listened to, and only listened to.

One felt this in a membership of a body such as the League, where one was carrying on the most sacred duty to mankind. I was made wise by various private inter-



views with men of long experience, who had a knowledge of the inner workings of the League.

The nations entertained extravagantly and there was no escape from a dinner each night after the assembly terminated at 7 o'clock. I made my contribution in anticipation of an attack which was in contemplation by a foreign country on Australia's tariff policy, but the attempt to broadcast it overseas to my Australian friends, unfortunately, broke down.

One is struck by the tremendous retinue of staff and observers that accompany the delegates, and it was only later, after a considerable stay while the assembly terminated its work, that I learned that the object of the presence of these gentlemen was to endeavour to ascertain what was really happening inside various countries, what their outlook was in various directions and what their representative was likely to say at the League.

The presence of the British entourage proved useful to me, but one felt that the whole atmosphere savoured of a secret service and there was nothing approaching candour.

I terminated my work at the League feeling somewhat distressed and disillusioned. A cordial invitation was extended to me to meet Mussolini as I travelled through Italy on the way to catch my boat at Naples. I had visited Italy before and could not help being struck with the enormous improvement in the general control of the people and with the apparent economy of the country.

While at Genoa I saw a hairdresser's saloon so attractive that I immediately proceeded to have a hair cut and shave, a thing one would have hesitated to do a few years before in any Italian centre. The hairdresser's saloon, for sanitary provision and cleanliness, far excelled anything I had seen abroad, except one famous saloon at Edinburgh. The tradesmen were efficient and obliging, the whole country seemed busy, the railway stations were improved, the Pontine Marshes were producing food, and the malaria-carry-



## THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

ing mosquito had been banished. Tipping was forbidden and the notice that it was illegal was published in every lounge and every lift in all the hotels at the centres I visited. The penalty was not only dismissal of the member of the staff who accepted the tip, but dismissal of the lodger who gave it. I actually saw this happen at Florence. Some provision was made in your hotel bill to pay an extra percentage for services, which was pooled and distributed by some committee of the staff under the chairmanship of the manager.

The railway services had improved out of all knowledge. Cleanliness was apparently the watchword and it was most encouraging to observe how the railway system and the conveniences for the travelling public generally had improved since my visit three years before.

Personally my advent as a League delegate was recognised by the authorities, and a special police attendant, who apparently had no other object in view than to see to the comfort of myself and my party, attended us wherever we went. At Milan I well remember, after being informed that the train would be held up for an hour for my benefit, taking a tour in a very high-powered car to enable us to view the beautiful statuary of that city. The divisional superintendent who accompanied us in the train had evidently detailed one of his staff on a push-bike to keep guard over us. After viewing various points of interest, we returned to the railway station. It was a warm day and I observed the struggles of this unfortunate member of the police staff in his endeavours to keep abreast of our car. Before returning to a red carpet, which was put out at every centre we visited, I suggested to my secretary that we should endeavour to offer some refreshment to this unfortunate youth, down whose face the perspiration was streaming. An effort was made in Italian, which apparently was not understood, and was then made in the French tongue. The lad on the bicycle clicked his heels together, gave the



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

Facist salute, and said in perfect English: "It is my duty and it was my pleasure, monsieur." There was nothing more to be said, and even the police attendants would not accept a cigar at my hands, although the cigars were of a quality better than anything that could be obtained from the nationalised industry in France or anything available in Italy. They were delighted, however, when I handed them some scenic views of the New South Wales coast, and bowed profoundly and thanked me when I told them they might keep them.

Waiting for my boat at Naples, my party was accommodated at a hotel right on the heights. You entered by a lift in the rock. Your luggage went by another lift, you arrived on your floor and were accommodated by an elegant and well-equipped bedroom and sitting-room and excellent bathroom equipment. The nation evidently desired to impress one, and at each centre where we stayed—for I had business at Florence and at Genoa—we were treated with tremendous courtesy and every consideration. Our sitting-room was decorated with an abundant supply of flowers as a welcome to my wife. The discipline of the place and the cleanliness of the city and its approaches strongly impressed me.

I instance one thing that occurred to show the close watch and ward that was then kept. I was invited to pay a visit to some scenic point, the name of which I have forgotten, which gave a glorious view of the Bay of Naples and Vesuvius, in the afternoon. I accordingly went, and apparently this was a centre which was of some popularity for tourist parties. We stayed in our car and drank in the magnificent view which was presented to us. Pedlars by the score had goods to sell—statuary and every type of stuff that was likely to appeal to a tourist. They kept their seats behind their wares until called by any member of the tourist party, who drove in a circle round the whole of them. An American lady with two friends had called one of these men to bring his wares to the car and she bought



## THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

some trifle, and was apparently debating the purchase of another and finally declined, whereupon the pedlar became very insistent, just as the oriental at Suez endeavours to force his goods on you. He showed his persistence by putting his foot on the running-board of the car, and his action was immediately noticed apparently by a gentleman in a black shirt, who promptly stepped out, pointed at him and sent him back to his proper place to vend his wares. I saw many illustrations of this discipline during my stay in Italy, but the people as a whole seemed to be working with a will. I had learned enough in Paris, where I had met one or two Italian exiles, well-informed and courteous men, to view with some misgivings the extraordinary political control that was being exercised over the people. It could only end as it did end, in totalitarianism and ruin for the nation.

It is a remarkable thing that throughout the world's history, with one great exception, dictatorships lead to tyranny and a desire for world domination. That great Roman, Cæsar, is probably the one exception, and it was, no doubt, the fact that the Latin tongue followed his warlike hordes that helped him to avoid the overwhelming tyranny that Napoleon and various other pundits of more or less doubtful character endeavoured to inflict on the world. And while one writes it cannot help flitting across one's mind that every now and again our great civilisations are, as it were, injured by mother nature producing some human monster or other bent upon world domination.

A pleasant voyage followed, with a stay at Colombo, where we were the guests of the President of the Executive Council and his wife, and where I had the good fortune to attend a race meeting in the usual sweltering weather conditions. Lifts to the grandstand, to the enclosure and your box were provided, and it was well that it should be so, because one had scarcely the energy, after being bandied about by the turbulent crowd, to whom a gamble is the greatest delight, to mount the stairs provided at most of our Australian courses.



I backed Australian riders and Australian horses, and, having backed four winners in succession, I felt I had had a good afternoon. My pockets bulged with rupees, and I was congratulating myself that I had recouped some of my heavy Continental expenditure. I joined my wife, however, who had spent her afternoon with friends, and was ultimately relieved of my ill-gotten gains by the expenditure she had involved me in at one or two emporiums. However, it was all in the day's work, and I returned to Fremantle not able to shake off a certain feeling of despondency concerning the policy of the Mother country and the Dominions in relying on the League of Nations instead of on their own strong arms.

To breathe anything of what my own feelings were would have savoured of disloyalty to a great ideal, and, thinking it all over, I decided to make my report. It was colourless; it was almost drab. I remember one honourable Senator saying when I presented it to the Senate that I read it badly and it was "not worth reading." He got this from an old Scotch story of the clergyman who asked one of his parishioners as to his sermon. Probably my friend of the Senate had discerned in my behaviour my misgivings concerning the future of the League.

When I made up my mind to remain silent I was guided to some extent by something Briand had let drop when he said: "We must all stand by it. It is the one hope of civilisation." He had evidently thought that the Kellogg Pact would strengthen the League's position by roping America into European politics. He was a close observer, and of those civilians who attended the League Assembly, Americans probably outnumbered all others by seven to one. There were a large number of women, cultured, well-read and close observers, who day by day attended the assembly, and I think that Briand felt that in time America must join and lend its powerful support to the high ideals of its ex-President, whose widow it was the good fortune of myself



## THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

and my wife to meet during our stay at Geneva. It was unfortunate that some plain speaking concerning the parlous state of the League was not earlier engaged in, but those who were its well-wishers hoped against hope for its success. The others were so concerned with their own national affairs that they were indifferent to world affairs.

I have always felt uneasy about my own attitude on my return. My conscience was torn asunder. I felt the League would fail. I felt the lack of sincerity in the hearts of many men who attended it. It was certainly backed with money and with lip service by many nations of the world, but obviously with a sinister purpose to serve their own future aggrandisement.

To have thrown a spanner in the wheel, one felt, might be a dis-service to mankind. On the other hand, where were we facing? Mussolini loomed large in European politics. Some of the more moderate Italian people had left their home country because they feared for the future. Japan was setting a course that looked as if it must ultimately end in war. The menace of Hitler had scarcely yet appeared, and Japan and Italy, while they could do a certain amount of damage in world affairs, were hardly able to make such an attack on civilisation as has since convulsed it.

It may be that I adopted a policy of *laissez-faire*, and my Government, the Scullin Government that succeeded it, and the Lyons Government that replaced the Scullin Government, lacked the real knowledge that one can obtain only by dwelling on the borders of the troublesome European countries.

There were obvious indications of a certain tightening up in Australia's economies. Prices of primary products were falling throughout the world and it was evident that a rescission would take place in Australia. Industrial strife was rampant. The arbitration system was not fulfilling the hopes of those who pioneered it. Industrial turmoil rather than industrial peace was the order of the day.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

The Government of which I was a member put forward a number of proposals designed to improve our system of arbitration. Cleverly, and with that political skill which marks parties in Parliament, the clamour arose, quite unjustifiably, that the design was to abolish arbitration in industrial affairs.

Individuals are sensitive to a degree in such matters. Arbitration had been fought for, and the politician immediately saw that it would be exceedingly unpopular to attempt to abolish it. Nothing was further from the minds of the Government, but the Opposition, with some skill, and understanding mob psychology thoroughly, started a campaign against the policy formulated on these lines. Owing to a schism in the party ranks, the Bruce-Page Government fell and went to the country. The Labour Party, led by Mr. Scullin, succeeded.

The issue was, as I have already indicated, fought on the question of arbitration. As circumstances turned out, it did not matter very much, because the fall in world prices was attended in Australia by unemployment and we toiled through a depression whose severity was greater than any we had previously experienced.

The depression was world-wide. America was probably the greatest sufferer, when it is believed that 12 million people were at one time out of employment. Panaceas of all kinds were put forward, in the main unsound, but some, owing to the severity of the depression and the suffering that was being endured, found a certain amount of support. Under such conditions no Government could run for long, and the Scullin Government, after some dissension in the party ranks, suffered an overwhelming defeat in 1931.

The succeeding Government, of which I was a member, was faced with the gravest difficulties. In times of prosperity no thought is given to what could be done and should be done when adverse conditions ensue in a country, and,



## THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

although our administration wrought some relief and conditions improved slightly, the return to normality was slow.

Britain had gone off the gold standard, Australia followed. Hundreds of thousands of pounds were spent to relieve the unemployment situation. To my mind, a great deal of this money was wasted. It brought about no improvement in our future capacity to produce; it merely relieved a situation of undoubted hardship without contributing anything to the economic improvement of Australia in the future. Personally, I have always thought, looking at the matter from a long range point of view, that Britain and ourselves both made mistakes in going off gold. I had strongly advocated a gold bonus during the depression years. It would have improved our economic position. It would have given employment and it would have furnished us with a commodity which is acceptable throughout the world. The British Commonwealth of Nations is a great gold producer, and looking at it from the narrower point of view of our national economy as a Commonwealth, I saw, and still see, a tremendous advantage to the Dominions and the Mother country from an adherence to the gold standard, and, without posing as a prophet, I believe the solution of many international difficulties will ultimately be found in a return to the gold standard.

Commercial wars are waged not only by tariffs, but by the appreciation or depreciation of the currency of a country to meet the particular needs of the hour. Tariff wars and currency wars are practically the same thing, and I have always felt the stabilising influence of gold in a world torn by anxiety for its individual nations.

Very slowly does the world proceed to take steps to minimise the rigours of future depressions. The international fund—which is really an international bank—properly expanded and supported, will do much to minimise future economic disasters, but it requires a world loyalty and world support. Even in the phase of the world's food



production the world has no proper economy. Millions starve, or live on the verge of starvation, owing to the tremendous shortage brought about by the disaster of war. The ancients were wiser than we. In their own small way they husbanded the surpluses of good years to provide for the lean years.

I see signs in the international bank, and some odd other things that are being done, of an awakening consciousness in this regard, but the world may have to suffer again before the international conscience can be awakened and some provision made of a world-wide character to prevent the death of millions from hunger.

A short-sighted view may be taken of the situation. A number of people attribute the economic troubles of the world to-day, and the shortage of food supplies, to the war. The war, no doubt, has accentuated it, but the fact remains that the peoples of the world as a whole are under-nourished and this can only be remedied by the intelligent application of the principles of production, not only amongst the more advanced races on the earth, but amongst the people who have not yet come within the sphere of our higher civilisation.

I have launched into the field of the higher economics, and I had better get back to outlining my attitude whilst for two years I remained in opposition.

The life of a Government when times are bad, prices depressed and unemployment rife is indeed an unhappy one. The public expect the Government to cure all the ills from which they suffer, and a Government desirous of retaining office and remaining in existence has to proceed with caution. It fears to economise. Untold difficulties faced the Scullin Government, and instead of applying the pruning knife in various directions, the proposal was put forward for the inflation of the currency—the resort of every monarchy and every Parliament from time immemorial when in financial difficulties. With the example of Germany, which



## THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

had reduced its own people to great poverty, before their eyes, the Scullin Government had to go to the country with a schism in their own party ranks, and the Liberal Party had a tremendous triumph at the election at the end of '31.

Of course, one's time during the interval and while in opposition, was not so fully occupied as when a member of the Government, and, although my leaders and myself contributed our quota in the Senate to harassing the Government and to criticising it, I found time to pass through that Chamber a Bill dealing with life assurance law for the whole Commonwealth. Sir Earle Page and myself had given much attention to this measure, which was to have been brought forward as a Government measure, and I was fully equipped with all the material necessary; in fact, I think the second reading speech on the Bill had been made during the life of the Bruce Government. I had no difficulty in carrying the second reading, but Opposition Senators, two at least of whom have been gathered to their fathers, made great sport and play in an endeavour to embarrass and delay the passage of the measure.

I knew it was all political play. Finally the measure was passed. Sir Earle Page was to pilot the measure through the House of Representatives. The Treasurer of the Scullin Government had promised to facilitate its passage, but embarrassment of one kind and another necessitated his placing it at the bottom of the notice paper, and the measure was not reached before the Scullin Government fell.

After the hours and days and nights I spent in piloting this measure through the Senate, I felt somewhat disappointed, but the wound has been salved, since, under a later Labour régime, the measure has been passed almost in the terms in which I introduced it, and is now the law of the country.

It was a pretty large order to undertake, but I felt that



it was a branch of the law which necessitated clarification and Commonwealth intervention. .

The Lyons Government was formed. I became a member, having been re-elected to the Senate by an overwhelming majority in 1931. Economies of all kinds were embarked upon, including that of Parliamentary salaries, ministerial allowances and cuts in the civil service.

Throughout my life I have felt very strongly that Australia treated altogether too cavalierly the question of its own defence. We relied on the strong arm of Britain and the superiority of the British Navy for our real protection. In the far away days before the first world war I made some contributions, through a friend, approving compulsory military service and strongly advocating it. I spoke during the conscription campaign from many platforms and from the backs of many trolleys. It was a pretty large order to ask a nation by referendum to conscript itself, and so it proved.

The leaders of all parties were really shy when confronted with the problem, a problem which reaches right down to national existence and which, to my mind, is inescapable. We loitered as it were under the protection of the League of Nations. Governments relied upon the principle of collective security when there was really no collective security.

The depression relegated the question of defence to the background, notwithstanding the fears of many that the cutting down of vital adjuncts to defence was a serious mistake. The activities of Japan in Manchukuo and China caused me great misgivings. The Chinese brigandage in certain isolated parts gave the Japanese a colourful excuse for action, and their propaganda in favour of their activities was based upon this fact. The Russians, however, had no illusions, and we now know that during all these years, when we thought peace was being secured, intermittent acts of war were occurring between Russia and Japan.

The Lytton Commission saved the face of the League



## THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

to some extent. Mussolini's activities gave rise to much misgiving, but no one amongst our leaders had the courage to advocate a policy of conscription. They clung to the League as a sort of obsession. We even lacked information and knowledge as to the exact position at Singapore and as to the effectiveness of the so-called rampart.

The triumph of the Liberal Party at the 1931 election was succeeded by similar victories in 1934 and again in 1937. We had made some effort to encourage recruiting, and one of the Ministers held large meetings encouraging voluntary service, and with some little success. The Leader of our Government was strongly averse from war. He had, during the 1914-18 war, been in opposition to the conscription campaign, and while one felt that the overpowering facts in international affairs were very disturbing to him, he could not, either for reasons of conscience or otherwise, advocate a really firm step such as conscription. We had seen the aggressive attitude of Japan. We had been through the Abyssinian incident. We saw Hitler's rise, and had very little doubt of his ultimate intentions, and my Leader in the election campaign directed every member of the Government by telegram to make a pronouncement in the following terms: "That the Government is not in any way committed to conscription and will not introduce it." He informed me that he was arranging for every Government candidate to make a similar declaration, and that he proposed to announce it as the unanimous party declaration. I telegraphed him in reply that I would make the declaration, and added: "It suggests itself to me that the Opposition policy is more likely to necessitate conscription than our policy of co-operation. As far as I can judge, the issue is attracting no attention here." The cold fact remains that no Australian party at that time was prepared to do more than play politics, believing that conscription would result in its defeat.

The application of sanctions had little or no effect. America stood out, and so long as the control of oils could



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

not be interfered with, Mussolini felt himself safe. He felt himself safe for another reason which more modern history has uncovered. Already Hitler had proposed to him that he should attack France, and that he himself should send an air fleet to bombard Paris. Mussolini refused the suggestion, but made good use of it with Laval and got a valuable *quid pro quo* for doing so. He was given, as it were, a free hand in Abyssinia; France, through Laval, agreeing not to interfere. Such is the murky history of international relations!

I continued as a member of the Lyons administration from January, 1932, until November, 1938. I made it my business to get in touch with the Government of New Zealand, who, notwithstanding the difference in our politics, treated me in the most cordial manner. Discussions on the question of defence arose, and it became manifest to me that our New Zealand brothers distrusted all totalitarian régimes. I sounded many of them with whom my personal relations were of a most friendly character and ascertained that the Cabinet would be willing to make a contribution to an Empire fleet for the Pacific. I had previously discussed this question in 1928 with some of the leaders of the Indian Delegation and felt their sympathy.

I had contacts in South Africa and knew that they would fall into line. I put over the air an article which I append, and which must be read having regard to the time at which it was broadcast. It was flattering to my view that the manager of the station was so impressed with the article that he refused to accept payment after he had heard me deliver it. The following is the article:—

### “EMPIRE INVULNERABLE”

By

Senator A. J. McLachlan.

The safety of Australia and its people is very much in all our minds to-day. There may be no immediate danger, but if it be not





Reception of T.R.H. Duke and Duchess of York (now Their Majesties the King and Queen) at Adelaide Town Hall in 1927. The Author (at right) being Minister in Attendance throughout South Australia.





*Author golfing with Sir George Pearce and respective secretaries.*



## THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

now, yet it will come—the readiness is all. The duty of public men at such a juncture is plain. We should strive for unity and endeavour to induce united action for our own protection.

So thinking, I offer no direct criticism of what is being done in Australia. Any effort is an improvement on the indifference of the past few years. Our dearest hopes of world peace we must temporarily banish.

Let us, then, consider our position as a nation really dependent for our safety on the strong arm of Britain—the naval arm. The policy of the past, of arming to protect Australia and Australia's commerce against raids, is totally inadequate in the light of possible offensive alignments. In fact, it is futile. For no nation will attempt raids, except with naval forces superior to our own. Our position as an island continent points in itself to the ocean as our first and best line of defence. As our isolation in the past was a great factor in our safety, to-day, with a possible combination of nations against Britain, our isolation is our danger. Once we have, as an Empire, lost control of the ocean, we are undone—economically we are ruined—for on our export trade depends in the final analysis our prosperity. We have recently learned that lesson to our sorrow, and Germany is to-day facing the same difficulty.

But worse still is our position from the defence point of view. Our oil supplies could be cut off, and the wherewithal to move a mechanised force, to fly our 'planes or operate our cruisers, would in time disappear. Without an enemy coming within range of our land guns, Australia would be reduced to impotence.

Thus a distinguished American puts America's position: "One fact is basic—the priceless gift of our geographical position enables us to depend primarily upon our navy for defence. We are the only great power now able to pursue the policy which protected England so well until the coming of the airplane. We need not fear air attacks from abroad. The record for distance flying is 6,295 miles, set by Russian flyers from Moscow to California, but for war operations the aeroplane's radius of action is but one-fourth of its maximum range, for the 'plane must return to its base, and it must be prepared to fight, to manœuvre, to waste time searching for its objectives. Canada also relies largely upon our fleet. She has a naval force of only six destroyers, and can begin to defend herself only after she is actually invaded. For our security we have become irrevocably committed to Canada's defence, and our aeroplanes by themselves could not do the job. Aeroplanes are formidable to an enemy attempting to land on our shores—but there has been no demonstration as yet of their ability to sink a



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

modern battleship under war conditions. They cannot imperil an enemy's fleet or sea communications. Only our fleet can do that, and to do it successfully our fleet must be superior to any foreseeable combination of enemies."

Furthermore, this policy does not require the maintenance of a large army or the fighting of land campaigns on distant continents. Sea power is sufficient strength, with an adequate air arm, and a small, highly trained, completely equipped regular army will be adequate. No enemy need attempt to land. Not that we, with our small numbers, could offer a lengthy resistance if he did. The enemy would select his point of landing, away from the range of our heavy coastal defences. Without the capacity to resist at sea and maintain a sea supremacy, we, I feel, are in dire peril. One and a half million Japanese soldiers have been landed in China because of China's inability to resist at sea. Aeroplane carriers would be employed to harass, alarm and maim our civilian population. New Zealand would fall an easy prey to-day to an enemy with control of the ocean. Such an event would be a constant menace to us. The safety of New Zealand is as important to us as the safety of France is to England. That country could provide an invading army with all its food and other requirements. It may shortly have supplies of oil. This country, within a few days' sail of our shores—peopled with the same people—is our natural ally in defence. She is in need of us and we of her.

Africa stands in the dire peril as ourselves, and much in the same position. The broad policy that should be pursued is not a matter for experts—naval, army or air. It is a matter of common sense, and to the experts must be left the implementation of the details. Our need is clearly sea supremacy. Britain has maintained it for centuries. Co-operation by the Dominions south of the equator, by the establishment of an Empire fleet, would enable her to maintain it to-day and for the future.

India, with all its wealth, is a wonderful body of loyalty to our Crown and to our form of government. They realise the danger to their freedom. Would not they co-operate with us and assist the Dominions to provide a fleet with battleships sufficient to ward off any attack on any of their shores?

Singapore, founded for our especial safety, is a focal point. Bases and docks are in contemplation, but something bolder and bigger must be done if we are to maintain world peace and our own freedom. Look around to-day and we find all nations arming as never before. The mighty United States, with its 120,000,000 of people, are preparing. Thus they write: "If war comes we can and should meet it on the sea, far from our cities and firesides.



## THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

We can and should be able to direct such a vigorous offensive against our enemy's naval forces, with which alone he could attack us, that he would be too occupied to dream of attempting an assault on our shores."

Isolation is no longer accepted as safety. I visualise co-operation with the British Navy. We would have a fleet capable of standing against and defeating any likely combination in the world.

We here, and in New Zealand, Africa and India, are not menaced to any extent by bombers. Any air attack must come from the ocean and from the carrier. London to-day is a danger to Britain's safety. The destruction, not of defences, but of the morale of the people, is what is largely aimed at by aerial warfare.

One of the greatest utterances by Australian public men probably was that wonderful visualisation—"One people, one destiny." Beside it ranks "the last man and the last shilling"—a practical but loyal realisation of where our future safety lay. There we find the spirit that should animate us to-day—the spirit of Empire co-operation.

Let me conclude by a quotation from Elliott's work: "We cannot settle the troubles of distant continents, but we can prevent the peoples of those continents from transporting their wars to the Western Hemisphere. We cannot shut ourselves off from every contact with other nations, but we can make sure that we command the seas, which are the medium of those contacts—the seas which are our ramparts and upon which we must stand watch."

The response by the public is gauged by the broadcasting station by the number of communications it receives from listeners in regard to an item, and I asked the manager to let me know how the public responded to such an idea. He informed me that he had had only some 60 or 70 letters expressing appreciation of the idea, and suggested he should put it over on Empire Day. This he did, with a slightly better result, but still far short of what he expected or I anticipated.

The war drums were beating, obviously not only throughout Europe, but in the east as well. Britain had slept, and the Dominions had shared in its slumbers. The raging monster in Berlin had either to be controlled or war



was inevitable, and war on a scale that civilisation had never known hitherto.

I severed my relations with the Lyons Government in November, 1938, by my resignation, to which I shall make more detailed reference later. Subsequent to my resignation, but before the outbreak of war, I addressed one or two public functions on the seriousness of the situation. I was received with a dumb silence. They preferred after-dinner stories to an exposition of the dangers with which we were being faced. And so war came, and we are now in the aftermath of this great holocaust in which, as a British race and a British Commonwealth of Nations, we were almost submerged.

We have triumphed with the help of the British-speaking races, and the marvellous recuperation and resistance of the Russian, in whom the love of his land transcends every other quality. To-day we are on the threshold of what may prove an even more devastating age, should war eventuate, than civilisation has ever known.

I penned an article to foster better relations and a closer liaison between the British-speaking races. It was published in a leading American paper, and I append it, because it has been, up to date, my only contribution to the cause of civilisation since my retirement:—

### THE WAR—AND AFTER

“Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,  
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side.”

Lowell's famous lines are singularly appropriate in this war-torn world. The peoples of the greater portion of Europe are in the chains of slavery, and an insistent call goes out to all freedom-loving people to stand four-square against the dark forces that threaten liberty.

It is in such a world state that Britain seeks aid in the gigantic effort she is making to maintain freedom, and in the newer nations of the world her cry falls upon sympathetic ears.



## THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Throughout Europe millions of men and women find themselves in the yoke of slavery, praying for a return to that freedom without which life is not worth living, and from all the lands that breed free men there marches a great army to set them free. It may take a long time, but the end is certain.

Millions of Scandinavians, the peoples of Holland, of Belgium, Poland, Czechoslovakia are living to-day under the domination of the jack-boot. The heel of it is on their neck and they are powerless. It is this reign of terror in Europe that must be terminated if the world is to breathe again; and it calls for a tremendous effort from the free peoples of all the free nations of the earth. And that effort is being made. From the British Commonwealth of Nations and its friends, ranged on the side of truth against falsehood, or good against evil, of freedom and justice against barbarism and tyranny, this effort comes, gathering greater strength day by day.

Out of it must emerge a newer and wider Commonwealth of Nations which will be capable of maintaining the peace of the world and insuring international justice.

Britain and her Allies will win this war. But we may find a world in ruins notwithstanding. Indeed, the present struggle may be but the precursor of one even greater. Little effort has been made to solve the various difficulties that confront the world in its economic life as a result of varying standards of living. Nature has apparently contrived that certain races shall adopt a mode of life that to others would be less than an existence. What are we to do about it?

President Wilson, with a worthy idealism, fathered the League of Nations, but he was unable to bring in his mighty republic as a member of the League. Strange as it may seem, during the stress of war, men and nations rise to great heights of patriotism and of idealism, but with victory secured, the frailties of human nature, including race jealousy, seem to return. Men looked to the League of Nations to give us a new world. It was a great ideal, but the frailties of mankind account for its failure.

After a period of comparative peace, the world is again torn asunder by war. Can human nature rise above this barbaric method of settling international troubles? Can we fashion a world from which the fear of war will be dispelled?

I signed, on behalf of my country, the Kellogg Pact outlawing war, only to be quickly disillusioned by a visit to the League of Nations' Assembly as leader of the Australian Delegation. Intrigue and political manœuvring in national interests pervaded the lofty business of the assembly. The might of the League was only moral. So it has ended, and to-day the nations who sponsored it



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

stand aghast at the pent-up violence and cruelty that follow modern warfare.

What now, then? The western world declares itself for freedom and the rule of law. On this basis the democracies rest. We in Australia are one of the democracies and, like Britain, we take our stand on it. And America! The magnificent lead that President Roosevelt has given to the United States, and, indeed, to all people who love freedom and justice, to all who long to see war banished from the earth and law and right again enthroned, has stirred us.

Surely then the way is pointed to what may well be called a Holy Alliance, having regard to what it stands for: an alliance firmly based on the principles of democracy, founded to maintain world peace.

May we not see in the co-operation between Britain and the United States of America in the matter of sea and air bases a precursor of still greater co-operation? Never has the U.S.A. reached out for domination. And the British Empire seeks no expansion. Allied in outlook, allied in facing a common danger, they must unite, lest divided they fall.

There is one phase of national defence with which I should like to deal. The Labour Party, as a political body, since its breach in 1916, has violently opposed a policy of conscription. The other parties, with individual exceptions, have followed in their wake. To my mind, the first Latin maxim of the law—*Salus populi suprema lex*—"The safety of the people is the highest law," still stands. I read it as a student.

Only our individual interests or our individual political outlook make us ignore that which is so patent under world conditions. I remember when I called one day upon Mr. Curtin, the late Prime Minister of Australia, and he referred to my retirement from the Senate. I remarked that, although I had done some things, including a great deal of administrative work, I felt there was only one thing of really first-class importance that I had been associated with, and that was the Financial Agreement. He said: "That was a big thing." I added that, apart from this, I could not recall anything of



## THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

real magnitude, except a Life Insurance Bill, which was at that time, although passed by the Senate, stowed away in the archives. He said to me: "It is strange you should speak like that. I have been here for a number of years, sometimes out and sometimes in, and it occurred to me the other evening, while in cogitation on similar lines to those on which you have been thinking, that the only matter of real magnitude that I have been associated with was the extension of our line of defence outside Australia. In that I altered a fundamental policy of the Labour Party." I agreed, and told him that I once said in the party room that we should throw him some bouquets on that account. "Yes," rejoined Mr. Curtin, "and one of your party said you should throw brickbats." This is quite true and actually happened. So much for the secrecy of party meetings.

It is to be deplored that the defence of a country should depend on party shibboleths or party feeling, and if we are to reach real nationhood and take our place, as I believe Australia will, as one of the first nations in the Pacific, we must endeavour to escape from the idea that military service is not an essential part of a man's duty to his country.

The question of defence, like the question of foreign relationships, should be a national one. There should be no difference between the parties as to the conception of the individual's duty. There should be no risk to the individual from advocating such a policy.

There have been men in the political arena who have not hesitated on the hustings to give unqualified support to compulsory military service, and I sometimes blame myself for not taking a stronger stand, particularly after my visit to the League of Nations, and my observations on the Continent of Europe regarding it. Possibly it would not have been too agreeable to my colleagues or my Leader in the Lyons Government.

My attitude in relation to the Abyssinian sanctions was forthright and attracted the notice of a very large section



of the Australian press, as well as a number of leading British dailies. I pointed out that collective security under the League had been subscribed to by the British Commonwealth of Nations, and that in that policy lay the one hope of civilisation. I expressed regret that any party should endeavour to make the situation as it then stood a plaything in politics. I described such action as "an atrocity against civilisation." I said that we had either to accept our obligations under the League to the full, or else, as the only alternative, to withdraw from the League. The tribute of a section of the Australian press, however, somewhat ruffled the leader of the Government. Nothing was said, but one sensed a certain restraint amongst one's colleagues.

Although a section of the Labour Party at the time was hostile to the imposition of sanctions, their press and a number of their conferences indicated support for the authority of the League. Another section of Labour stood for neutrality, and withdrawal from Geneva. Labour, indeed, spoke with two voices. One section even went so far as to demand the closing of the Suez Canal to Italian shipping. The President of the Miners' Federation said that the League's action was the only safeguard against war, and that they were definitely opposed to a policy of neutrality. The Amalgamated Engineers took a similar stand. Various leaders, including the Premier of Tasmania, indicated that the abandonment of the League was unthinkable, and the organ of the Australian Workers' Union indicated that the party must be in favour of applying sanctions to Italy should Mussolini persist in his attack on Abyssinia. In this they had the support of the Australian Railways' Union. Ranged on the other side were "The Labour Daily" and the President of the Victorian Trades Hall Council. The Sydney Labour Council indicated its opposition to the imposition of sanctions.

My definite attitude on this matter, and the acclaim with which it was received both at home and abroad, may not have furthered my political interests, but at least I felt I had



## THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

done my duty according to the dictates of my conscience, and in the best interests of the country in the light of the position in which we found ourselves placed.

Sanctions failed. Abyssinia fell, and with the fall of Abyssinia it may be said that the League fell, too.

We came to the 1937 election, and I have already indicated the attitude of the Government. Hitler was in the saddle, rattling the sabre and vowing world conquest. I felt we had deserted Czechoslovakia, and said so. Stirring times were just ahead, but we knew that we were on the eve of probably a world crisis.



## ADMINISTRATIVE

FOR some years I had been the political head controlling the operations of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, a body that has contributed much to the advancement of Australia, and its primary and even its secondary industries. Constituted in its present form by the Bruce-Page Government, it has stood above politics and outside politics for nearly a quarter of a century. It is constituted by personnel to whom self-interest is naught as against the interests of science. Its contribution to Australia's development cannot be calculated in money. Geophysical research was amongst its activities, and I recollect full well, when authority was sought to bring a distinguished scientist from overseas, and there was some delay in the matter, how one of the distinguished members telegraphed the Secretary of the Council to let the Minister understand that the application of geophysical research would be invaluable in determining the presence of underground water supplies. This gentleman understood my practical mind, and apparently had some misgivings as to whether I was enthusiastic over geophysical research. I taxed him with it at a later date, and I do not think he was embarrassed, because in his view the end justified the means. The presence of the distinguished overseas scientist helped at Kalgoorlie, it helped at Bendigo—those two important mining centres—and it helped to train in the actual practical application a number of our Australian students who are using, and have used, the methods employed, to the benefit of Australia.

The Council has a number of well-wishers, men entirely outside the political arena, who give, not only service, but their money for the furtherance of certain objectives.



## ADMINISTRATIVE

During my régime the Council extended its efforts towards helping the secondary industries in various particulars. The late Sir George Julius gave his time and extraordinary abilities to furthering the work of the Council in every possible way. He has gone, but the enthusiasm and energy which he devoted to the affairs of the Council will long be remembered by those associated with him. He gave considerable thought to the adoption of standards in industry.

The fishing industry, so sadly neglected by Australia, was given considerable attention. I had secured the services from overseas of an expert in fishing, and we had at least one enthusiast in the service of the Council. We brought from Canada a man trained in modern methods to control a trawler which was built for the purpose of demonstrating what could be done.

During the couple of years when I was out of office the work continued, the Minister in charge being zealous in his endeavours to stimulate an interest in the fishing industry.

We had aerial photographs taken of tremendous shoals of tuna, and I venture to express the view, from what I learned, not only from my expert officers, but also from men familiar with the Australian coastline, that it possesses tremendous potentialities for future development. It is a striking commentary that with these resources at our disposal the Australian people as a whole are not sea-minded. Little or no attention for years had been given to the development of the fishing industry, which, properly conducted, should not only prove lucrative to the fishermen, but also beneficial to Australians as a whole. Our erstwhile friends, the Japanese, made repeated incursions into our waters, and I believe have sent our own product back in tins to be consumed by the Australian people.

I opened laboratories, one particularly I remember, at Merbein, near Mildura. Salt had been affecting, in fact



destroying some of the citrus trees. This occurs apparently from the raising of the level of the saltbed, which underlies a great portion of Australia, by the seepage developed from the open channel method of irrigation. The ingenuity of our officer at Merbein temporarily solved the problem by the construction of a number of wells at the lower levels. Into these was discharged the saline that would otherwise have destroyed the citrus trees in the neighbourhood. The wells, of course, were placed at low-lying points.

The woods and forests were an important adjunct to the work of the Council. The seasoning of timbers, and the various tests to which they had to be submitted, were made a close study. The timber seasoning was mainly supported by an outside benefaction.

The production of petrol from coal by hydrogenation was exercising the public mind. Germany, preparing for the future and regardless of costs, was engaging in this method of providing fuel for itself. We had examination abroad, and I brought to this country a young Australian who had equipped himself overseas in a manner that enabled him to deal with both the scientific and the economic side of the question.

This proved, on both the scientific and economic sides, an extraordinarily difficult question. I was determined to do whatever I could to secure oil supplies for Australia in the event of our sea communication being temporarily cut off, or even suspended. We had but a limited supply concentrated in various tanks throughout the continent, and I finally decided to submit to Cabinet a plan for the hydrogenation of shale based on the Newnes field. I visited the scene of operation—a most extraordinary valley not far from Lithgow, in New South Wales. Various small holders were extracting shale from small seams in the neighbourhood, and, if I recollect aright, were sending it either to Sydney or to some neighbouring town for treatment.

The magnitude of Newnes impressed me. There is a



## ADMINISTRATIVE

wealth of shale to be won from the hillsides. Tunnels had been put in, and a very large sum of money spent by an English company, whose founder gave rise to the name Newnes. The question of retorts was an extremely difficult one, but, after considerable negotiation, it was finally decided to support the efforts of Sir George F. Davis by considerable Government subsidies to develop the Newnes field. He went abroad for this purpose, having come to an arrangement with the Government, and I think it was unfortunate that he was captivated by a Czechoslovakian method of retorting, which did not appear to give the satisfactory results obtained by the older methods employed when Newnes was working many years before. The retorting of the shale had always been the difficulty, and since my departure from office I understand that various difficulties have been encountered, and that the valley which was previously Newnes has to some extent been deserted, and the work proceeded with on the further side of the range.

I had little hope that the production of petrol on an economic basis from shale could be achieved, but I felt that at least we could produce enough to keep our aeroplanes in the air in the event of attack. Newnes and the neighbouring valley are, I believe, about to be closed down, but the day will come, as the shortage of world supplies of oil develops, when Newnes will be a valuable asset, and will probably be carried on under somewhat different methods, both scientifically and practically, from those which are adopted to-day.

The Waite Institute at Adelaide, which is conducted by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, does work of tremendous importance, and of great interest to the primary producers of this country. On my last visit there I saw a member of the scientific staff, who was experimenting with the production of a ryegrass that would grow on an 8in. rainfall.

It was once suggested that we should send abroad for drought-resisting fodders for use in Australia. I opposed this



proposition, because it has always been my view that we have some of the best drought-resisting plants in the world in Australia, and that it would be much better to develop the plants which were indigenous to the country and were likely to be successfully cultivated here.

As Vice-President of the Executive Council from 1931 to 1934, I was much engaged in administering the work of the Development Branch and the work of the C.S.I.R. It was a labour of love, and a pleasant association which I shall never regret.

From 1934 I became Postmaster-General, still administering these two departments. The administrative side of the Post Office from the ministerial point of view is not difficult. A competent Director-General and competent departmental heads in the Central Office, with competent State Deputy Directors, left a Minister with few worries. I was attacked from time to time for not reducing various charges, particularly the postal rates, but I had a strong feeling that science would probably operate before very long in such a manner as to destroy millions of pounds that had been spent in telegraph, and possibly telephone, lines. Just as the cables between the Dominions and the Motherland have been rendered of secondary importance, so, I venture to think, and have always thought, developments will take place which may necessitate the writing off of millions that have been expended in connection with telegraph and telephone lines.

Broadcasting was rapidly developing, and the Australian public voiced their appreciation of it by taking out licences in large numbers. I opened many broadcasting stations, one or two national stations, and several that were privately owned. Some, perforce, owing to my inability to attend the functions, I was able to open by means of radio from my own office, or my own home, and, although perhaps the personal touch was not there, the people in Brisbane, or the people in Perth, or wherever it may be, felt that an interest was being taken by the Post Office in this new thing which was to come into the world's life so rapidly.



## ADMINISTRATIVE

I was very interested in endeavouring to put underground at least the most important of our telephone and telegraphic systems. It appeared to me that aerial attacks on this country might render our position very difficult if bombardment was engaged in. Certain lines have been put underground. They were regarded as key lines. How much has been done (if anything) since I do not know, and it may be that the authorities hold their hand because of the ever-present fear of scientific advancement, a fear to which I have already referred.

I had many calls from the Prime Minister. I regarded myself as an absolute Minister for work. I piloted the Gullett tariff through the Senate at the request of the Prime Minister. It was done under much distress, as for about ten days of the time I suffered from a mild but unpleasant attack of ptomaine poisoning.

A tariff is weary work. Every Senator has his own fiscal views, and during the shivering months of June and July I worked the Senate week by week until I finally got the task through.

When the iron and steel industry was under consideration, I prepared a most comprehensive speech under the guidance of a very skilled officer from the Customs Department. I devoted the whole of one Sunday to the preparation of what I regarded as the settling speech of the whole of the items. Judge of my amazement when "blooms and billets," the first item in "Iron and Steel," passed without a murmur. Our time had been wasted, and my oration remained in my portfolio. I thought I was going to have an easy passage with the whole of this division, but when individual items came along—steel posts and all sorts of other things, the result of the production of blooms and billets—suggestions for amendments came by the score, till, driven to desperation, I asked the critics whether, having passed the first item and encouraged the production of steel, it was done only for the purpose of allowing the manufacturer to gaze at it, or for the



purpose of enabling him to produce some of these other articles. This point of view in the long run prevailed.

My chief trouble was in the lines regarding clothing, where I was unfortunate enough to encounter the opposition of one or two Senators who had considerable practical experience, and whose attacks, from time to time, although they did not succeed, were taking up a large portion of the Senate's time. Weary at one week-end, I asked the senior officer of Customs to prepare for me an attack on a line which I knew some of my critical friends would be very anxious to pass, as it was a product peculiar to their own State. He asked no questions, but prepared an admirable speech, which I carefully revised, and, to some extent, moderated. I was hoping, by this means, to get even with my Senator friends who had caused me so much bother concerning the clothing lines. I entrusted this speech, which I had typed, to a very old Senate friend, and when the line came on—and it was towards the end of the Tariff schedule—he jumped to his feet, delivered the oration, and moved a suggestion for a reduction. I perforce had violently to oppose any reduction, but the flood-gates of the six members from the State concerned were opened, and for two whole days, much to my chagrin and my discomfort, they debated this question, although I knew full well that nothing could happen. I had to sit them late and sit them early, but one thing I learned, that it was a valuable experience. I made up my mind never again to attempt such a thing, having regard to the sad consequences to myself and my various colleagues.

I do not know whether I ever told my Leader of what I had done. With his long experience he always sensed how a debate was going, and sat still like a good jockey, saying: "Get your Bill," or "Get your clause." It was an experience for which I paid, but it was of value.

During these periods, as President of the Executive Council and Postmaster-General, until my retirement, I attended to many duties assigned to me by the Prime Minister. Amongst them, as Acting-Attorney-General, was the enforce-



## ADMINISTRATIVE

ment legislation against the New South Wales administration. Some trouble was anticipated in New South Wales, and with the sanction of the Prime Minister I took every step to prevent civil disturbances. I remember very well the day the Bridge was opened, and the incidents attached to it. Much excitement prevailed, but I listened on the wireless in the Attorney-General's room, whilst the Solicitor-General stood by the telephone receiving advice as to how affairs were proceeding, and ready to give instructions for prompt action if any outbreak occurred. A New South Wales election followed, and a disturbing element was eliminated from the political life of that State. Few of the public, I think, realised how close we were to civil disturbances at that particular time. The common sense of the people in the long run asserted itself.

There was considerable unrest in the southern States at the high price of sugar. The Prime Minister himself intended to visit Queensland with a view to arranging for a reduction in the price of sugar, but his indisposition necessitated his calling upon me to take his place. I took with me the Senior Officer of the Customs Department, who had made a study of this industry, and who controlled certain of its ramifications in the Department of Customs.

The sugar growers thought that my visit was a mere gesture at first, but when they were given to understand that my intentions were serious, they kept in very close touch. I proceeded as far north as Cairns, and while at Townsville opened a laboratory for the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. The whole town and district appeared to attend the function, and the local press was represented by a gentleman somewhat up in years, who endeavoured to take what I had to say down in longhand. I sent my secretary to him, and told him not to worry, but that we would let him have a copy of the speech, which, by the way, I delivered extempore. He said to my secretary: "Don't forget the quotation."



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

While speaking, I had thought it necessary to make some reference to the apparent youth of the officer we had in charge, and I quoted some lines which recur to me now—

“His years but young, but his experience old;  
His head unmellow'd, but his judgment ripe.”

We had a great morning, and I saw samples of the cattle crossed with the zebu, which I was arranging to introduce into this country. They were immune to tick pest.

I returned to my hotel, and lunched with some officers of the Department. I secured a room, and proceeded to dictate to my secretary, as best I could, what I had said. After about an hour or more at the typewriter we emerged with a typed copy of the speech. Judge of my amazement when I found almost all the townsfolk ranged in cars desirous of showing me hospitality. I dashed off to the newspaper office. They all followed. I was most cordially received by the editor, who thanked me, and immediately asked: “Did you put in that quotation?” I pointed it out to him, and he proceeded to open his ice chest, and desired that I should have some refreshment with him. I was refreshed with a little whisky and some Helidon Spa, and proceeded, at the invitation, I think, of the Mayor, to make some further calls. The hospitality was so overpowering at each place I visited that I determined to confine myself to the consumption of Helidon Spa. We went to the club—I think it was Tattersall's—where the chairman, who had broken his ankle a day or two before, was waiting to receive me, and proceeded to uncork champagne. I made my escape in company with my secretary, on the ground that I had to meet my wife, who had gone out with friends to look at some strawberry gardens. I dashed away, and fortunately she had just arrived at the hotel. My secretary recovered our luggage, and I motored with speed to the boat, where I got on board, feeling much like a container of Helidon Spa. The hospitality throughout Queensland was very marked.



## ADMINISTRATIVE

We reached Cairns, and my work really commenced. Let me, in passing, say that I know of no more beautiful tour than along that Queensland coast through the Barrier Reef. It out-rivals anything that one can find at Colombo. The captain very courteously, being well ahead of time, took us through and around many islands, to the delight of my fellow-passengers.

At Cairns I made my headquarters for a few days, and motored to many factories processing the cane. I crawled through many, and used to return at night feeling as if I had been immersed in a bath of molasses. The process was explained to me. We rode on a narrow railway line, run, I think, by Diesel engines, which conveyed the cane from some of the plantations to the central factory. The business seemed to me to be conducted on economic lines, and nothing appeared to be wasted.

I could never get far away from certain gentlemen who had large interests in the industry, and who had some fears for its future. I saw an interesting factory while in Cairns. The United States Government had put a heavy duty on certain logs which were being sent into that country from Queensland. They omitted, however, to put any duty on veneers, for which these logs were largely used, and which, I might add, were of exceeding beauty. The astute owners immediately imported from Sweden, if I remember aright, a machine which enabled them to turn the logs into veneer, and so obtain entry for them to the United States in the lower ranges of duty. Such ingenuity was deserving of reward, and I have no doubt got it. At Canberra can be seen some of the most beautiful woods turned into tables, bookcases, and all manner of useful furniture.

I made the journey south by rail in order that I might view the countryside and examine one of two spots where tobacco was being grown. I came to certain conclusions, but as I was no expert they are of little interest or value. It took the United States of America some hundred years to



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

produce that fragrant tobacco so popular in Australia and elsewhere.

I had myself risked a certain amount of money in an endeavour to produce a really first-class leaf in Victoria. Success attended our efforts in a small way, but the cultivation of tobacco is a delicate business. We had the proper drainage, we had the proper site, we had suitable soil, and we produced in a year or two an excellent sample of leaf, so good, in fact, that some of the settlers proceeded to destroy their apple orchards and go in for planting tobacco. Our management was so exultant at the favourable results that they finally launched money into a small factory, and sent out to various traders cigarettes whose quality was unsurpassed. Nemesis quickly overtook us. Blue mould made its appearance, and our seed beds were destroyed year after year. Personally, I think the mould is very often air-borne. The aphid is a troublesome gentleman, and one has to be equipped with a lot of natural history before changing practices from fruit growing to tobacco.

I have seen an example of it in my own operations on a small property I hold near Melbourne. Thinking rape would be a valuable fattener for some backward lambs, I had some 40 acres put in. It came up, and looked really well. One day my manager and myself observed that it was wilting before the lambs had been put upon it. We inspected it, and found it alive with aphid. The briar acts as a host for this pest, and there was a considerable quantity of briar on my property and in the immediate neighbourhood. The lambs were turned on to the rape in the hope of saving it, but apparently did not relish the presence of the aphid, and were shortly afterwards taken off. The rape revived, and, to my amazement, was doing really well. A close examination disclosed the fact that the rape had an invasion of ladybirds, who live upon the aphid. Such is the law of tooth and claw. I have ventured to plant no further crops of rape.

We journeyed south, visiting Rockhampton, and had a



## ADMINISTRATIVE

lengthy conference at Brisbane with the Premier of the State and with the controllers of the sugar industry. At this conference there were present representatives of the various sugar interests in Brisbane and in northern New South Wales. I put the case for reduction in price as the Government saw it. I stressed the heavy sacrifices which people of the southern States had been called upon to make. The result was that, ultimately, a reduction of ½d. a pound was made in the price of sugar, and was effected by an agreement reached at Canberra.

I visited Tasmania in place of the Prime Minister, and was very cordially received at various centres. I afterwards opened the new radio station near Launceston, which could give such good service to Canberra, extraordinary to relate. The Director-General of the Post Office and myself attended a function for the opening of the telephone service between the mainland and Tasmania. I took time on both occasions to observe how far the work of the C.S.I.R. had benefited Tasmania. With its heavy rainfall, the State lends itself to scientific activities. Tasmania is a country of extraordinary beauty, and its Great Lake will one day prove its value as the source of tremendous hydro-electric power. As it is situated in a district having an exceedingly heavy rainfall—I believe the railway on the west coast averages something like 138 inches—there will be no lack of water to supply all the electric power required in Tasmania, and one cannot overlook the possibility of its transmission to the mainland.

I was perforce, and acting on behalf of the Prime Minister, sent to Western Australia on a mission of great urgency and of considerable importance. It had come to our knowledge that the West Australian Government, when negotiating for the huge iron ore deposits at Yampi Sound, had reached a stage that might place them under the control of the Japanese. Telegraphic or telephonic communication was impossible, and I was directed to see if anything could be done to cancel licences or leases that had been granted.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

Received with every courtesy, I found that our action was too late. Leases had been granted, and transfer to a company, I think, approved. We had information that this company was controlled by the Japanese, and I returned with the position no better, in fact worse, than it was when I departed. To Australian industry Yampi, by reason of its location, was at the time of little use, but a foothold practically on our mainland for our potential enemy gave rise to serious misgivings.

Such are some of my journeyings as a member of the Government.

Earlier, and shortly after my first appointment, I had visited Oodnadatta when the first sod of the railway extending to Alice Springs was turned by the Minister of Works. It brought back many early recollections, and on the journey up I found myself exceedingly popular with my colleagues and companions. We were living in Adelaide at the time, and the peach crop was just about ripe. My wife had thoughtfully brought to the train three or four cases of succulent peaches, which, kept on the ice by the conductor of our special train, largely contributed to our refreshment on the long journey which our attendance entailed.

I had many other but shorter journeys through the east coast of New South Wales, the Newnes desposits to which I have referred, and the forests of the south-east of South Australia, and during the period of my ministerial office I must have travelled many thousands of miles in the discharge of various duties.

During my tenure in office I had frequently to attend functions and give addresses, some with preparation, some extempore. Selecting a few at random, here is an address I delivered at the annual conference of the Australian Broadcasting Federation, the last official act before relinquishing my office as Postmaster-General:

"I am delighted to have this opportunity of again meeting you representatives of the Commercial Broadcasting Stations of the Commonwealth.



## ADMINISTRATIVE

"Since your last conference further development has taken place, and we now have 120 stations in the Commonwealth—25 National and 95 Commercial. The number of listeners has increased to nearly 1,100,000, representing a potential audience of nearly five millions and a radio receiver in two out of every three Australian homes. I readily admit that much of the credit for this satisfactory state of affairs is due to the good judgment and enthusiasm you have displayed in your organisation and operation of that part of our broadcasting system which is entrusted to your care.

"The Commercial Broadcasting Stations are an essential factor in that system. You must, therefore, realise that, in accepting a licence from the Department for such a station, you undertake a share in the responsibility for the provision of an important service to the public. You are, of course, in the broadcasting business for the purpose of making money, but because of the privilege which your licence bestows on you, that quite legitimate objective must be secondary to your fundamental duty of service to listeners. I do not wish to over-emphasise that point to-day, however, because your past performances indicate on the whole that you fully realise that obligation.

"It is gratifying to me to observe the good relations which exist between yourselves and the Department, as they are further evidence of your co-operation with it in the difficult task of administering the Broadcasting Regulations with satisfaction, as far as is possible, to all concerned. The Department has on very few occasions been obliged to interfere with your activities. It has no desire to do so. There must, of course, be some rules to ensure orderly development, but I am sure you will agree that those which the Department has framed have not curtailed your progress in any way.

"On this occasion when you are gathered together for your annual stocktaking, as it were, I am sure you will not mind my suggesting a few points for your consideration, which are based on representations which have been made to me at various times, as well as on my own observations.

"In the first place, I wish to mention what I regard as a serious deficiency in your programmes, and that is the absence of items culled to make this fair land of ours, and its culture and achievements, better known to your listeners. It may be that you rely so much on recorded items—many of them imported—for your programmes, but the fact remains that you are doing very little to foster Australian national sentiment. I think we might well expect all Australian broadcasting stations to take some positive action in this connection. There is a wealth of material in Australian history, literature and poetry from which you could fashion programmes



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

which would be far more acceptable to your listeners than some of the records from overseas. I hope you will do something in this direction.

"Secondly, there is the question of Sunday advertising, which threatens to become a hardy annual. I have mentioned the subject to you before, and I must say, quite frankly, that I am disappointed that nothing seems to have been done to improve matters. Now, gentlemen, I can assure you that there is quite a large body of listeners who are friendly disposed towards you who heartily dislike the blatant Sunday advertising which is being undertaken by many of your stations. I put it to you that it would be well worth while doing something to remove this potential cause of unpopularity. I am not suggesting that you entirely forego Sunday advertising, but I do think you should at least aim at the elimination of direct sales talk on Sundays at a very early date.

"Finally, I appeal to you to take steps to ensure the avoidance in your programmes of anything of a kind which can best be described as 'nasty.' Unless you exercise great care, there is a grave danger, especially with recorded items, of objectionable expressions being broadcast. When a listener tunes in to your station, he as it were invites you into his home, and you should not take any risks of causing him offence. I refer in this connection, not only to suggestive expressions, but also to vulgarities, some of them imported, the like of which you would not express in your own household.

"I trust you will accept this homily in the spirit in which I utter it. I have nothing but goodwill for the Commercial Broadcasting Stations. Any suggestions I make to you, therefore, are actuated by a desire to assist you to increase your popularity and achieve greater success.

"I have pleasure in declaring your conference open. I hope your deliberations will be fruitful and that you will return from the beautiful spot which you have selected for your meeting place like giants refreshed to undertake the problems of the next year."

Over the radio from my office I opened the Station 6WN Perth, and as I have preserved the manuscript I give it below:

"Since the inception of the National Broadcasting Service, it has been the consistent aim of my Department to expand the service in such a way as to ensure the greatest benefits to listeners wherever situated in the Commonwealth.

"When the Department assumed responsibility for the technical aspects of the national service, there were only eight national sta-



## ADMINISTRATIVE

tions, all situated in the capital cities. Country residents were receiving a very mediocre service and the Department decided to proceed at once with the establishment of sufficient stations, in carefully selected rural districts, to ensure satisfactory reception in all but the sparsely populated centres of the Commonwealth. Twelve such stations are now in operation and others are contemplated.

"For listeners in the remote areas and the territories, a short wave station, VLR, is operated at Lyndhurst, Victoria, and another is being constructed in Perth.

"Having made provision for listeners in country and remote districts, the Department decided to improve the service in the capital cities by the modernisation of the original stations which have been in operation for many years, and by establishing a second national transmitter in Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth and Hobart, to enable the Australian Broadcasting Commission to provide an alternative programme, as it is already doing in Sydney and Melbourne. This expansion of the service in the metropolitan areas is, of course, justified by the fact that more than 60 per cent. of the listeners' licences are held by residents of those areas.

"With the opening of this station, 6WN Perth, each capital city now has its two national stations. Perth, indeed, deserves the second station, because the licence density in its metropolitan area—in which nine of every ten homes has a wireless receiver—is surpassed by only one other capital in the Commonwealth.

"The development of the broadcasting services in the State of Western Australia is typical of what has been done throughout the Commonwealth. Listeners will well remember when the only station in the State was 6WF. Two regional stations have since been erected—6WA in the South-West and 6GF on the goldfields—and now comes 6WN. These four stations, together with the short-wave transmitter which is expected to commence operations about the middle of next year, will ensure a satisfactory national service for most of Western Australia.

"Another development has been the provision of a suitable channel for the relaying of programmes from the Eastern States. This facility makes it possible for western listeners to share in the enjoyment of all the outstanding programme items of the Commonwealth.

"Coincident with the extension of the national service, there has been a gratifying expansion of the commercial stations, eight of which are in operation in various parts of Western Australia.

"The growing popularity of the services is reflected in the licence statistics. There are already 74,000 listeners' licences in force in the State, and the number is being increased at an average rate of nearly 1,000 every month. This progress speaks well for the good work which the broadcasters—national and commercial—are doing,



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

and I commend them for their excellent efforts to provide the best possible service for listeners.

"Throughout the Commonwealth there are now 120 broadcasting stations—25 national and 95 commercial. When nearly all of these stations were recently linked up for the broadcasting of an address by the Prime Minister on the historic events which were taking place in Europe, there was a potential audience of nearly 5,000,000 in the 1,080,000 Australian homes which are equipped with wireless sets. It is just 15 years since the first Australian station commenced operations, and our progress in that time is surely proof that, with whatever imperfections our broadcasting system may have, it is in the main admirably suited for the peculiar conditions we have to face with our relatively small population scattered over such a wide area.

"I now officially declare 6WN open. It will be a very welcome addition to the broadcasting services of Western Australia, and I am sure the Australian Broadcasting Commission will make good use of the station as a medium for the entertainment and instruction of listeners."

My opening observations of the new transmitters 2FC and 3LO were in the following terms:—

"It is just about twenty years since the first broadcasting station commenced operations, and so rapid has been the development of the broadcasting art that there are now more than 75,000,000 radio receivers in use in the various countries of the world, and the number of listeners is estimated to reach a stupendous total of more than 300,000,000.

"Many factors have contributed to that really amazing progress, but perhaps the most telling has been the continual striving for better things on the part of those responsible for the service. Radio engineers, for example, have been specially active in their research into the wonderful science of wireless telephony, and, as a result, there have been remarkable improvements in the design and construction of broadcasting transmitters.

"To-night the setting into operation of the new 2FC and 3LO bears witness to the fact that Australia is, in this regard, keeping abreast with the rest of the world. The new plant—which I am glad to say has been constructed in Australia—embodies all the latest developments in the design of high-grade broadcasting stations. Tests have shown that the new stations provide the very high standard of performance and fidelity of transmission which the Department considers essential in a unit of the National Broadcasting



## ADMINISTRATIVE

Service. The power of the new transmitters will be 10,000 watts, as against 3,500 in the station they supersede. The masts of the stations—730 feet and 700 feet high for 2FC and 3LO respectively—are the highest in Australasia. They, too, have been manufactured in Australia out of Australian steel.

"This occasion will doubtless awaken memories of the early days of broadcasting in Australia, for the original 2FC and 3LO were, with 2BL and 3AR, the first stations in their respective States. They were the pioneers of broadcasting in the Commonwealth, and they had to blaze a trail in regions unknown, because the broadcasters of those days were, of course, without experience of the new art, and indeed there were hardly any listeners.

"Usually the demand creates the supply, but these pioneer stations anticipated the demand of the public, which at first was slow to take advantage of the new service. In the first year of their operations less than 2,000 listeners were licensed, but so successfully did they lay the foundations of the service that we know to-day that, within five years, the four stations in Sydney and Melbourne had caused 250,000 listeners to be licensed in the States of New South Wales and Victoria.

"In more recent years the Australian broadcasting services have progressed rapidly. We now have in the Commonwealth 120 stations and nearly 1,100,000 licensed listeners. Two out of every three Australian homes have a wireless receiver, and when all the stations are linked for a special broadcast there is a potential audience of nearly five millions.

"These new transmitters for 2FC and 3LO are not before their time, and the fact that 45 per cent. of the total listeners in the Commonwealth are within 25 miles of the four stations is ample justification for the expense which has been incurred. Indeed, something would have been done long before now to improve the National Broadcasting Service in Sydney and Melbourne, but for the more urgent need for first providing reliable services in country districts where none previously existed.

"Having attended to that most pressing phase of the development of the National Service, the Department proceeded with its plans for the modernisation and expansion of the service in the capital cities. And so to-night we have these new stations in Sydney and Melbourne. I have much pleasure in declaring them open, and I trust that they will carry on the tradition of service to their listeners which has been typical of 2FC and 3LO since the inception of Australian broadcasting."

On several occasions I opened by air a Post Office Exhibit



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

at the Brisbane National Show, and the following is the copy of an address I delivered on the 17th August, 1936:—

“Twelve months ago, speaking from the General Post Office, Adelaide, I was privileged to declare open the Post Office Exhibit provided on the occasion of the Brisbane Royal National Agricultural Association's show. That display presented a striking and impressive appearance. The ingenuity of those responsible for this display provided an atmosphere in which the explanations and demonstrations of apparatus did much to inspire visitors and to encourage them to devote a little more consideration to that universal machine—the Post Office.

“In the realms of business to-day interest has been more and more diverted from the problems of production to those of distribution. The Post Office creates and distributes not goods, but services, but the analogy holds, and the success attained in the evolution of highly efficient and diversified public communication utilities focuses increasing attention upon the economic importance of securing their more effective utilisation.

“Few members of the public are aware of all the Post Office services which it would be to their interest to employ; that the annual turnover exceeds £147 millions; that the capital invested in fixed assets and plant is more than £54½ millions; that it is one of the largest groups of business undertakings in the country to be found under a single Administration, and that it is one of the greatest employers of labour. There are very few, moreover, who do not depend in some way or other upon these diversified services which embody a strikingly practical demonstration of the commercial application of modern scientific research and discovery to the solution of the complex problems of human intercourse in every field of endeavour.

“Post Office administration must be sensitive to local and temporary changes. If a new factory is built or a new township developed, the Post Office must be ready to serve it. It must prepare for special demands, such as the posting at one time of hundreds of thousands of catalogues or circulars. It must be equipped and ready to cater for the exceptional volume of business at Christmastide, during an election, the Melbourne Cup or a Test match. Each of these events, as well as a host of others, imposes extraordinary pressure on personnel and equipment in the telegraph, telephone, radio and postal fields. A great storm may dislocate its services and call for quick adjustments and repairs. A market boom, the death of a celebrity, or a trial in which the public is interested throws on one



## ADMINISTRATIVE

or more post offices a sudden burden which cannot be refused, and must be promptly met.

"A vast aggregation of services like that of the Post Office depends not alone upon the fullest use of the facilities available, but upon a liberal measure of friendly and helpful co-operation. Everything tending to goodwill, understanding and confidence between the public and the Post Office inclines to make the operations of the latter more efficacious and less costly. The knowledge that every member of the community is a shareholder in the Post Office, and that each takes a live and active interest in the partnership, acts as a stimulus to further effort on the part of the many thousands of people comprising the organisation—an incentive to further achievement—an encouragement to excel further in the provision of the highest levels of service, to the advantage of both the individual and the community as a whole.

"The Post Office is steadfastly pursuing a course designed to ensure that the most recent advances in the art of communication are placed at the disposal of the Australian public; that the services it controls are both necessary and effective; that they are conducted upon lines combining maximum usefulness with minimum expenditure; and that they are used to the fullest extent in directions most likely to confer benefits on its co-partners in every walk of life.

"It is necessary that this policy should be widely known and appreciated by the community, and this knowledge can best be imparted through the instrument of publicity in its widest sense.

"The purpose of the Post Office exhibit, occupying space so graciously made available by the Brisbane Royal Agricultural Show authorities, is to bring the public behind the scenes of Post Office working, and to demonstrate in an arresting manner the varied types of equipment and methods upon which the Post Office services depend. It serves, also, to bring more prominently under public notice the many facilities which could be more fully employed to the advantage of the community and to foster in the public mind a greater understanding of Post Office problems and a more sympathetic appreciation of its aims. It also furnishes tangible evidence of the endeavours of the Post Office to meet the specialised communication needs of modern social and business life. Here will be seen the results of the efforts of the engineer, the physicist and the chemist—amazing mechanism, almost human in performance, used in every-day Post Office communications, but of which the public as a whole has a limited knowledge.

"Post Office publicity is not, however, confined to displays and exhibitions. The columns of the press and other publications are largely utilised. Brochures, folders, and leaflets featuring in an at-



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

tractive way the services of the Post Office are distributed. Extensive use is also made of the art of poster design, and shortly the public of Queensland will see Post Office advertisements on many railway hoardings throughout the State.

"Still and moving pictures are exhibited widely throughout the Commonwealth. During the year more than 1,000 lectures are delivered at business colleges and schools by highly trained experts in the several branches of Post Office operations, for the Department realises that the student of to-day is the executive of to-morrow, and the instruction received while young will increase his efficiency as a member of the business community.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, I am sure that from what you see to-night at this fine exhibition, prepared by the Queensland officers of the great Department of which I am privileged to be Ministerial head, you will agree with me that the Australian Post Office is well abreast of modern developments in those fields in which it labours for the public good. I have great pleasure in declaring open the Post Office Exhibit of 1936."

My speech at the inauguration of the Australian Flying Boat airmail was delivered in Sydney, and was as follows:—

"To-day marks the official opening of another great link in the Empire chain of communications. It is a further step towards linking together the British Commonwealth of Nations by air.

"This Empire flying boat service will facilitate the communication services of the Empire, and one can look forward in the near future to the extension of this service until it will have girdled the Empire.

"Apart from the convenience on the communication side, this event is of momentous import. It is the outcome of a great conception—it is an All-Red Route by Air.

"We pay our tribute to the imagination of those who conceived the scheme; we pay our homage to the scientists who have made it possible to master the monsoon, to defy the terrors of the Timor and Tasman Seas; and we admire the courage of those pioneers—both men and women—of the British race who have blazed the trail. Australia owes to them a debt of gratitude.

"It is only a little over three years since the first air mail service between Australia and the United Kingdom was opened for commercial traffic. Fifteen months after it was opened the service was duplicated.



## ADMINISTRATIVE

"In the first year of the service the quantity of air mail carried in both directions aggregated only 25 tons. The loading for the year just ended was more than double that quantity. It is anticipated that the Empire flying boats will bring to Australia the enormous total of 400 tons of mail per annum, 120 tons of which will go on to New Zealand. We expect to send 40 tons by air from Australia to Empire and foreign countries during the first year of operation, and that 55 tons of first-class mail matter will go from New Zealand and other Empire possessions in the Pacific. Yesterday there speeded from Singapore the first inward 'all-up' air mail to Australia.

"I offer my congratulations to those who conceived, and to those who have carried out, this brilliant scheme, and so have made available to the communication service of Australia this speedy method for the carriage of mails. Our isolation will tend to disappear, our business life will be quickened, and we shall be able to give a fresh rendition of 'Rule Britannia'—it will be 'Britannia Rules the Air.'

"I now have pleasure in tendering to Your Excellency this special mail bag, which contains a letter from yourself to His Majesty the King, as well as a number of other special communications to addresses in the United Kingdom."

From my office in Melbourne I opened the new post office at Ceduna, in South Australia.

I opened the Australian Federal Council's Conference of the Royal Life Saving Society.

The World Radio Convention was held in Sydney in April, 1938, and my response to the toast of "World Radio and the Convention" was in the following terms:—

I pointed out that little reflection was required to realise the tremendous strides made in radio development, such development being probably unequalled in any other branch of science, and having been accomplished over a few decades. Those present would recollect the time when almost incredible reports reached us of the new invention, rendering it possible to transmit and receive messages through the ether without the use of a connecting wire.

Passing from the experimental stages, radio was first used as a means of telegraphic communication, and the services it afforded were a great boon to shipping. Australia first started with a system



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

of coastal wireless stations. A big advance was made with the opening of the Beam wireless telegraph service to England on the 8th April, 1927, which was followed by the opening of the wireless telephone service to England on the 30th April, 1930. This placed Australia in a position to communicate by telephone with 53 countries, and with over 90 per cent. (29,700,000) of the telephone subscribers of the world.

In more recent years radio had been utilised to bring the people living in the more remote areas of Australia into closer contact with the centres of population, the possession of low-powered sets enabling them to keep in touch with convenient centres, and to have the great advantage of up-to-date news, bright entertainment and uplifting educational talks taken into their homes at a moderate cost.

Television had advanced to the stage where it had been established as a commercial proposition in England, and its future development would be watched with keen interest.

This World Radio Convention would be of immense value in bringing together leading authorities and controlling interests in the radio world, for discussion of problems and the interchange of ideas cannot fail to be of immense service to those engaged in radio circles.

It was deplored that the passing of the late Marchese Marconi had deprived the convention of the privilege of his presence. Australia realised to the full the debt owed to the outstanding services of men like Mr. H. P. Brown (Director-General of Postal Services), Sir Ernest Fisk (managing director of the Amalgamated Wireless Company), Mr. W. J. Cleary and his predecessors associated with the national broadcasting system, and the controlling interests of the various commercial stations, and the promoters of the convention were to be congratulated on their enterprise and success in bringing together so many prominent personalities whose efforts were exercising such a beneficial influence in the expansion and development of radio.

On behalf of the Prime Minister, I attended the annual dinner of the Commercial Travellers' Association at Adelaide in August, 1937, where I delivered an address.

I attended the opening of the Port Augusta to Redhill railway at Port Pirie in July, 1937, and addressed those present.

I opened various new post offices, and at other times



## ADMINISTRATIVE

pointed out the enormous capital value of the fixed assets and plant employed by the post office, which served to impress the recipients of the new service.

I struck a somewhat new note in opening the National Broadcasting Station, 4QR, in Brisbane, as will be seen from a perusal of the following:—

“Once again I have the pleasure of participating in the opening of a new broadcasting station, and I can assure you that each such event is a source of great satisfaction to me because of the fact that every additional station means improved service for listeners.

“The Australian system of broadcasting was, I think, very happily conceived to meet the peculiar conditions of the Commonwealth, with its vast spaces and scattered population. Its aim is to provide satisfactory reception of alternative programmes—as far as is practicable—throughout the Commonwealth, and the success already achieved by the national and commercial stations in realising that aim may be gauged from the fact that during 1937 more than a million listeners’ licences were issued. They represent a wireless receiver in two out of every three homes in the Commonwealth and a potential audience of four and a half millions.

“In its administration of the broadcasting laws my Department is at all times actuated by the desire to further the interests of this huge army of listeners, and that is its guiding principle in encouraging commercial stations and in erecting national stations in suitable locations throughout the Commonwealth.

“When the national broadcasting service was inaugurated in 1929, and the Department was entrusted with the technical side of the service, there were only eight national stations, and they were all situated in the capital cities. There was urgent need for more stations to provide satisfactory reception for country listeners and a developmental programme was at once prepared by the post office. Much of this programme has been completed with the establishment of twelve regional stations in various country centres. Others have been planned and will be installed as soon as practicable. Considerable expenditure has also been incurred in the provision of suitable telephone lines for the relaying of programmes to the regional stations from national studios in the capital cities and to permit of interstate relays of special items. Queensland has shared in this development. Regional



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

stations are already in operation at Rockhampton and Townsville, and it is hoped that a third will commence service in the Darling Downs before the end of the year.

"Having progressed as rapidly as possible with the development of the service in rural areas, the Department has in recent months taken steps to improve conditions in the capital cities. This new station, 4QR, is another step in that direction. Sydney and Melbourne have for years past each had their two national stations, but the Department and the Australian Broadcasting Commission have realised that alternative national programmes should also be provided for the other capital cities. Brisbane listeners are certainly entitled to the alternative service which 4QR will now supply, for in the metropolitan area of Brisbane four in every five dwellings are equipped with a wireless receiver, and there are more than 70,000 licences in force within 50 miles of the station, representing an audience of 300,000 people. They will now be provided with a wide variety in the programmes of the commission, and, with the added attraction of three commercial stations will have at their command a broadcasting service which will cater for the most divergent tastes.

"I have now great pleasure in formally declaring 4QR open for service, and I do so with every confidence that it will be a worthy unit of the national broadcasting service."

On the 21st September, 1937, I opened the Merbein Laboratory, as Minister in Charge of Development and the C.S.I.R., and the subjoined address may be of interest to those who watched the growth and development of our dried fruits industry:—

"It gives me very great pleasure, not only as Minister in Charge of Development, but as a citizen of Australia, to be present this afternoon in order to open these laboratories.

"When one reflects on the achievements of the dried fruits industry, despite difficulties which would have completely discouraged all but the dauntless, it is quite natural to feel a glow of pride in participating in this event which is linked with those early pioneering efforts. It is, I think, eminently suitable that for a few moments this afternoon we should recall to mind something of the work of those who really made this building possible.

"Just over 50 years ago Mildura was a sheep station, carrying one sheep to ten acres in good seasons and with about one-third that carrying capacity in dry years. On either side of it were



## ADMINISTRATIVE

other stations, where now we have Merbein and Red Cliffs. The faith of a few, the magic of science, and the toil of men and women have transformed these Mallee areas into hives of close settlement of progressive people famous the Empire over for the products of their labour.

"Fifty-two years ago Alfred Deakin visited California, Colorado and other parts of western United States of America, and while in California met George and William Benjamin Chaffey, Canadians who were successfully promoting a great irrigation scheme there. Mutually appreciative of each other's ability, it was not long before George Chaffey followed Deakin, and he and his brother sold their interests in California. After some delays Mildura Station was purchased, and the Chaffeys set to work to transform the Mallee. I do not propose to go into detail about the vicissitudes of those days, the lack of facilities, the thousand and one happenings which demanded knowledge, patience, courage and faith in ultimate success. Sufficient to say that to-day the name of Chaffey is honoured among us and will be while Mildura and Renmark continue.

"Shortly after the initial clearing had been done and while town planning was in the forefront, the Chaffey brothers offered a prize for the design of an agricultural college, and three years later Lord Hopetoun, Governor of Victoria, laid the foundation stone of the agricultural college where the Mildura High School now stands. That high school benefits to this day from the endowment originally planned to foster the college. I venture to suggest that we may regard these new laboratories as, in one sense at least, fulfilling the ideals and hopes of the Chaffeys.

"During those early years very few would know at first hand the soil, water, manurial and other requirements of fruit trees, and thus there was a field for exploitation by those who desired to dispose of fruit trees and vines, and of so-called expert knowledge. Many of those living in the area to-day can recall those times. Now we are living and labouring in a scientific world and things are not left quite so much to chance. So within this building are to be found men working in the best interests of the industry, men who are too modest to describe themselves as experts, but who, nevertheless, do know a great deal about vines and the fruit of the vine, and who are constantly seeking greater knowledge for the community benefit.

"I am, as you will have noted, merely selecting and touching on some of the early events, and in so doing I hope to focus attention on the place this laboratory should have in the industry.

"In 1893 the first general harvest was gathered, but, lacking



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

facilities, there was no market for fresh fruit. Thus the beginning of drying on a large scale and processing was to follow. There are still problems awaiting solution in this field, and the growers, through the Commonwealth Dried Fruits Control Board, the Mildura Packers' Association and C.S.I.R., are employing a chemist who is working here and in packing sheds with the aim still further to improve colour, quality, pack and so forth.

"Growers of Zante currants were unable to obtain the yield which they expected until, in 1896, Mr. Catton Grasby visited Greece and there observed growers practising cincturing. He brought the idea back to South Australia, and it was eventually incorporated into practice with an immediate and marked increase in yield. We are still studying, and should study, methods of treatment of vines to increase yield and quality. This same year saw the efforts of W. B. Chaffey, aided by J. J. T. Lines and Tom Rawlings, culminate in the formation of the Mildura and Renmark Fruit-growers' Association, which about a decade later grew into the Australian Dried Fruits Association. Packing sheds were established and rack-drying gradually displaced tray-drying.

"In 1909 Merebin, or Merbein, was thrown open for dairying, but very soon the cult of the vine preponderated, and to-day this is a great dried fruits district, and this laboratory, while serving all the districts, is located here.

"In 1912 the Mildura High School was opened on the site of what was originally to be the agricultural college, and one of the teachers engaged was Mr. A. V. Lyon, who is now the officer in charge of this laboratory, and of the old one since 1919.

"The war adversely affected the production of dried fruits in Europe and Asia Minor, and presented the opportunity for the Australian product, with the result that exports rose from about 1,500 tons to 10,000 tons. This is only about one-sixth of present production and about two-ninths of present export, but it was a notable achievement in those difficult days.

"In 1905 the disease known as 'black spot' had worked havoc in the crop, and again in 1916 the harvest was very seriously reduced. So concerned were growers that they imposed a levy on dried fruit to establish a research station at Merbein, and they placed Mr. Lyon in charge because, while at the Mildura High School, he had demonstrated his interest in growers' problems. From 1919 to 1927 local funds were supplemented by State and Commonwealth grants. During the past ten years the station has been administered by the Commonwealth Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, and in recent years the Commonwealth grants have been further augmented by grants from the Dried



## ADMINISTRATIVE

Fruits Control Board. In addition, the personal and official interest of that body has been shown by the fact that Mr. Peter Malloch and Mr. A. L. Johnstone are co-members with the C.S.I.R. chiefs of the Divisions of Plant Industry and Soils on the Committee of Control for the station. Growers, too, are personally interested through the advisory committee, at present consisting of Messrs. D. C. Winterbottom, A. R. McConchie, A. Lever, J. A. Lockhead, A. E. Cameron, J. Gordon and W. Heaysman, with Mr. A. V. Lyon and Mr. F. K. Watson, of the Water Conservation and Irrigation Commission at Griffith.

"The keen interest, good counsel and continued support of these gentlemen is very much appreciated by the Commonwealth, as I am sure it must be by the industry.

"While I am very happy to be the Minister concerned with C.S.I.R. and all its many activities, you must not expect me to be completely familiar with all the details of work in progress. Nevertheless, I cannot refrain from mentioning a few of the major investigations which have been carried on here, and, indeed, in justice to the scientists, it is my pleasant duty to do so. Our fruit has to compete with that from the United States of America and from Mediterranean countries, and hence it is essential that a high standard of quality and pack must be maintained. The British consumer requires a light colour and the cold dip gave this, but it carried with it a relatively long drying period. The Merbein station devised a 'mixed dip,' which enabled rapid drying and still gave satisfactory colour. This dip is now in use by almost all growers, and it has meant a very considerable financial gain to the industry, which for 1930, when it was first employed, was assessed at £20,000.

"A pest problem, the infestation of fruit by an insect known as *Plodia*, has at times caused serious loss overseas. This pest was studied and a fumigant, ethyl formate, has been proved a sound control. Its use by packers has resulted in efficient control of this and similar insects, thus removing a factor which adversely affected our product on the British market.

"The salt problem is being studied, and already much is being done to alleviate or to remove this condition. Methods of application of irrigation water have been the subject of a great deal of thought and investigation, and what can be more important than the proper use of that water which, as Ernestine Hill so graphically describes in the title and subject matter of her recent book, is turned into gold?

"Investigations into pruning, cincturing, methods of cultivation,



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

use of fertilisers and so forth have been in progress since the inception of the station, and this practical work has been correlated with fundamental studies of the growth of vines, their root systems, the development of fruiting buds and the movement and storage of food supplies. It is not too much to say that the efforts of the station in this direction have resulted in a material increase in the average yield per acre, as well as improvement in quality. Not only has this work been of value here, but it has been carried to other dried fruit areas along the Murray, such as Nyah and Woorinen, to mention two.

"Consistent with its policy of development, the Commonwealth Government has made increasingly larger sums available for scientific research. As an example of this, provision is made for governmental expenditure in this direction during the current financial year of £170,000, as compared with £138,000 for last year.

"Future progress of the dried fruits industry, as well as of the other industries of Australia, including both primary and secondary industries, is inextricably bound up with scientific research. Our future depends upon the efficiency of our scientists and upon the ready translation of the results of science into practical use. There must, therefore, be the closest co-operation between the scientist and those engaged in the different industries; industry must become more and more scientifically minded and receptive to the fruits of science. What remains of the conservatism of the past must give place to modern and more progressive methods. The dried fruits industry is, I think, a model for other industries of what can be accomplished by the adoption of a progressive policy embracing all that science has to offer.

"There has been a phenomenal increase in the sales of dried fruits in Britain. The average sales during 1933 to 1936 increased by 54%, as compared with the period 1923 to 1926. The average annual sales during 1923 to 1926 of sultanas, currants and raisins were 52,309,000 lb., as compared with 80,194,000 lb. during 1933 to 1936.

"The growers started this station and I am sure the growers will feel proud to-day to see in this splendid and well-equipped laboratory a testimony to their efforts and those of the pioneers of the dried fruits industry. Problems will constantly arise, despite all that has been accomplished, and in this building efforts will be concentrated on their solution. I am glad that the Commonwealth Government saw fit to provide the funds for its erection, and I now have much pleasure in declaring it open."



## ADMINISTRATIVE

The Rundle Street Post Office, to provide increased facilities for the people of the east end of Adelaide, was opened by me in October, 1937.

The Country Broadcasters' Association invited me to open their new Sydney studio for their company station, 2GZ, Orange, and I did so in April, 1937.

I delivered addresses from time to time on the fishing industry, and I append a copy of one:—

### "THE FISHERIES INDUSTRY.

"In a new country like Australia it is the imperative responsibility of Governments and private enterprise to apply themselves continuously to promoting the expansion of existing industries and to the development of new industries. It is urgent that we should increase the population-carrying capacity of Australia if we are to continue to hold it.

"It is not, however, my purpose to deal with the records of any Government in this regard, but to apply myself in particular to fisheries.

"In recent years increasing recognition has been given to the fact that Australia, like other progressive countries, must undertake the systematic study and development of her fishery resources. Taking the lead in this vital matter—vital because this country should at least replace imported fishery products, totalling over £1,000,000 annually, by her own, and increase her population of hardy seafaring men—the Commonwealth Government has, through the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, instituted a comprehensive scientific investigation. This aims at providing both private enterprise and the legislator with the essential information and basic facts upon which developmental policies can be based.

"A sum of £80,000 has already been provided for this purpose, and it is apparent that substantial additional funds will be required to provide the information necessary to establish a virile industry.

Putting the matter simply, we may say that there are three lines of development to be followed: The making of a general survey in order to assess the fishery resources of raw materials; the study of the best methods to be adopted in converting these resources or materials into readily marketable form and of transporting and storing them; the study of ways and means of assisting the active industry and of stimulating demand.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

### *"Survey of Australian Fishery Resources.*

"In the first place, accurate information is required as to what fish, shellfish, etc., exist in Australian waters in large and dependable quantities. We already know something, but not all, about the bottom-dwelling fish, upon which the Sydney trawling industry is based. It is quite possible that the trawling industry can be extended. Apart from the fact that the grounds are not yet fully surveyed, the Great Australian Bight is known to be capable of giving a large yield of fish. Large, long-range Diesel-engined trawlers are coming more and more into use elsewhere, and with these and the development of cold-storage facilities afloat and on shore the way will open up for a distinct advance in fishing activity. This development should be hastened. From trawling sources alone Australia can at least double or treble her existing meagre domestic fish supply.

"But what of the vast shoals of fishes—we call them pelagic fishes, such as pilchards, tuna, mackerel and so forth—which are said to frequent the upper layers of the seas round Australia? Information on these is perhaps the prime necessity of the moment, since, if they can be shown to be plentiful, they can be made the basis of a new and extensive industry for Australia—that of the production of fish meal and fish oils, much of which could be used most profitably for the improvement of stock and poultry feeds. It is chiefly to obtain this essential information that the Commonwealth Government is building a research vessel, capable of using the large purse-seine nets and other gear necessary for the capture of pelagic fish in large quantities. In fact, the exploratory side of the fishery investigations will absorb the bulk of the expenditure.

"In order to provide preliminary information as to the seasonal distribution of shoals of pelagic fish, a series of aeroplane flights is being carried out off the southern and eastern coasts. Already these flights have demonstrated the presence of large shoals of fish, and valuable photographic records of these have been obtained.

"It will, of course, be necessary to find out all that is possible about the migration of such fishes, where and at what age they spawn, how quickly they grow in the various regions, and how quickly the stocks would regenerate themselves—that is, what yield or weight of fish could be removed by man annually without seriously diminishing the head of supply.

### *"Transport of Fish.*

"Few, surely, will deny that improvement can be made in the general quality of the fish marketed in Australia to-day. Right



## ADMINISTRATIVE

from the moment the fish is caught its treatment must be such as to preserve its freshness. We should be able to say definitely how to effect improvements. To this end a study will shortly be commenced of how, and to what extent, fish deteriorate, handled as they are at present; for comparative purposes, a similar study will be made of the same types of fish handled by the most modern and hygienic processes. Then, in the new food preservation laboratory soon to be ready in Sydney, the best methods of canning, smoking, freezing, or otherwise preserving important Australian fishes will be studied. The most suitable methods of storage and distribution will also be determined—in fact, it is realised that improvements in methods of distribution are fundamentally important. A larger demand for fish will thus be created.

“If, as seems probable, large shoals of pelagic fish are located, commercial development of fish meal and oil production will quickly follow. As a measure of preparation for this, the marketing qualities of likely meals and oils are being studied in the chemistry department of Melbourne University.

### *What Other Countries Are Doing.*

“The final objective of these fisheries investigations is, of course, the prompt utilisation of results. The latter will be made available to the trade and to fishermen by bulletins or other means. To what extent may development be looked for? First of all, let us review briefly a very few of the many results which other countries have reaped from the scientific investigation of their fisheries.

“With most admirable energy Japan has elevated herself to first place among fishing nations through continually searching for new grounds and new fish products. Russia is rapidly expanding her fishing industry by similar means. Germany, too, is mounting in the scale, her investigators having discovered that a vast wealth of herring can be trawled from the North Sea, where for hundreds of years other nations have been content to catch this fish pelagically—i.e., near the surface. Norwegian research vessels were responsible for the expansion of fishing effort to the lucrative far north grounds, while Danish scientific survey made known the great stocks of Greenland waters. In Canada and the United States of America new sources of marine wealth are continually being disclosed by the biologist and chemist. In these countries, as in Great Britain, where the fisheries are intensively exploited, the stage has been reached where conservative measures are necessary. These measures can only be devised by the legislator upon such scientific evidence as is available. Thus we have the valuable halibut fishery of the Pacific being nursed back to something like its former



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

level of productivity by scientific methods of control. To such an extent has fisheries science become an exact science that, in the case of many fishes, it is possible to predict what catches are likely to be made from year to year. Thus the element of luck is gradually being prevented from imperilling the industry. More and more, both Government and business interests now tend to depend on the precise information resulting from scientific inquiries.

### *"Introduction of New Fish.*

"Some countries, then, like Australia, have unexploited fishery resources requiring to be surveyed. Others, like Great Britain, have fully, or more than fully, exploited fisheries, requiring conservation upon scientific principles. There is a third activity of science which has an essential place in all countries—the introduction of new fish or shellfish species likely to thrive in the area concerned, or the restocking of areas with species which are being heavily fished out. This type of activity is called propagation. To take examples, we have the introduction of European trout to America, and, conversely, of American trout to Europe, and the continual stocking of Germany's rivers with young eels, this being a logical sequel of the discovery of the life history of the eel, showing that in nature young eels do not reach German rivers in any numbers.

"There has been some propagation work done in Australia, but the field lies wide open for further effort. Are the conditions more suitable, in the case of salmon, for some other species than the Quinnsat salmon—say, for the Coho salmon? Can faster-growing strains of trout—say, of the cut-throat species—be profitably introduced? To what extent can the rock oyster be more extensively cultivated, and could an exotic species like the Japanese oyster be introduced in selected localities to augment supplies, as in the United States?

"The scope for fisheries' research in Australia is enormous. The area to be covered is also great. The co-operation, not only of the industry, but of such State agencies as are in a position to aid, will be invaluable. Some of the problems requiring attack are of importance to the Commonwealth as a whole; others are more particularly of importance to the individual States. While the Commonwealth will have its research vessel and laboratory, it is hoped that before long each State will have its fishery patrol vessel, which can devote part of its time to investigation, and also its own experimental laboratory, even if this latter is on a small scale. To cover the ground satisfactorily this is the minimum of equipment necessary.



## ADMINISTRATIVE

"The fisheries industry played a big part in the early development of Australia, and national economy demands that it should play an even greater part to-day. I, therefore, give you the slogan—'Back to the seas again!'"

I spoke in the following terms concerning the tobacco industry, of which I have made some earlier mention:—

"It is my pleasure to speak to you to-night about a commodity in which most men and a good many women are interested. The commodity is tobacco. The quality of his tobacco is as important to the smoker as the quality of his food, and I understand that the feminine sex is also developing similar discriminatory tastes.

"As smokers, you can appreciate the excellence of the particular brand of tobacco you use, but how many of you can tell of the toil and unremitting care which has been exercised by growers and manufacturers in order to place the finished product ready for your use? There is the grower, faced with varying seasonal conditions, disease and insect pests, which all take their toll, and the skill of the manufacturer, who has to recognise the possibilities of each type of tobacco, subject it to an intricate manufacturing process and place it before you in an acceptable form.

"It is generally agreed that there is no primary product which demands more careful attention to quality than does tobacco, and in an effort to improve the quality of Australian-grown tobacco, the Commonwealth Parliament has done its utmost to support the interests of the tobacco growers, consistent with a proper regard for the interests of the consumers and the community as a whole.

"In pursuance of its policy to encourage the development of the industry the Commonwealth Government made available in 1934 a sum of £100,000, spread over a period of five years, to stimulate production on sound lines. Portion of this fund is being used by the Commonwealth Council for Scientific and Industrial Research to carry out intensive investigations in diseases, smoking quality, curing and processing of tobacco, and the remainder, £75,000, is being used by State Governments to cover the cost of field experiments, demonstrations and advisory work.

"The Government recognises that the establishment of a new industry in a new country, particularly an industry like tobacco, is fraught with many difficulties. Not the least of these is the education of our people in the various phases of production.

"The production of tobacco is fairly widely distributed over Australia. The approximate contribution by each State to the



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

total output is: Queensland, 37%; Victoria, 36%; New South Wales, 12%; Western Australia, 12%; South Australia, 1½%, and Tasmania, 1½%.

"The main centres of production are North Queensland, Texas, Ashford, Tamworth, North-East Victoria, and Manjimup, in Western Australia. There are smaller areas of production at Woodstock, Bowen, Sarina and Miriam Vale, in Queensland; Tumut, in New South Wales; the Goulburn Valley, Gunbower and Pomonal, in Victoria; the Adelaide hills and Penola, in South Australia; and the Derwent Valley, in Tasmania.

"The production of tobacco last year totalled 6,000,000 lb., and the estimate for this year is 4,000,000 lb. This reduction is due entirely to unfavourable seasonal conditions. Like other crops, we must expect some fluctuation in the total production of tobacco, due to unfavourable conditions of one kind or another.

"It might appear that the widely scattered areas are separate units in production, but in effect they are one, for each year the tobacco technical officers of the Commonwealth and of the States meet in conference and plan for the progress of the industry on an Australia-wide basis. There is thus a co-ordinated plan of work which avoids overlapping and duplication.

"On all sides it is apparent that funds provided by the Commonwealth Government to assist the industry are being used to good purposes. This is strikingly evidenced by the fact that during the past two or three years the use of home-grown leaf has increased from 5% to almost 30% of the total consumption. This increased consumption of Australian tobacco has been accomplished without any discomfiture to smokers, and shows that we can and do produce an acceptable smoking tobacco.

"Further evidence of the progress which is being made by the Australian industry is to be found in the import figures of the past decade. During 1925-26 the value of tobacco imported into Australia amounted to £2,700,000, as compared with £1,600,000 for 1935-36.

"This reduction of imports is not wholly due to home production, but the development of the Australian industry has been a big factor in the matter.

"Although I consider protection to be subordinate to such matters as scientific research and cultural practices, the present Commonwealth Parliament has not been neglectful in this respect. The import duty on leaf used in the manufacture of plug and cut tobacco in which less than 13% of Australian leaf is used is now 5/- per lb., and in the case of leaf used in the manufacture of cigarettes in which less than 2½% of Australian leaf is used, the



## ADMINISTRATIVE

duty is 6/7 per lb. A differential rate of excise duty applies to tobacco made wholly from Australian leaf. This tobacco pays 3/10 per lb, as compared with the other rate of 4/6 per lb.

"The most outstanding achievement for the benefit of the industry has been the discovery by the C.S.I.R. of a simple, practical and economical means of controlling the devastating blue mould disease of tobacco seedlings. Marked advances have also been made in many other directions, and I do not see any reason why the contributions of science, coupled with the intelligence of the growers, should not lead ultimately to the production of at least the requirements of our home market and eventually, perhaps, to the development of an export trade. In order to do this it will be necessary to concentrate on the production of high quality tobacco, which can be grown only on suitable soils in favourable climatic regions.

"There can be no doubt that to-day in Australia we are laying securely the foundations of a most valuable industry; an industry which is destined to play a big part in our national economy.

"There seems to be no reason why we should not aspire to a volume of production comparable with that of our sister Dominion, Canada. Canada produces about 40,000,000 lb. of tobacco annually and is an exporter. If we did likewise we would need to export about 25,000,000 lb., as the saturation point of home consumption is about 15,000,000 lb. per annum.

"Tobacco is a primary industry which enjoys the advantages up to 15,000,000 lb. per annum of a substantial unsatisfied home market. Up to that point it has not to face a contracted world market like other primary products. Its employment possibilities are, therefore, still considerable, and there is also the important aspect of the trade balance. We must not be discouraged by temporary set-backs like we have experienced this year. All industries regress at one time or another, especially young industries. Our goal should be the production of at least 15,000,000 lb. per annum, and I feel confident that before many years have elapsed that goal will be attained."

I opened a new transmitter for 3HA, the Hamilton broadcasting station in June, 1937.

I frequently opened the meetings of the full council of the C.S.I.R., and the following is the text of a broadcast giving details of some of the achievements of the council:—

"It is my pleasure to address you this evening on some of the



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

achievements of the Commonwealth Council for Scientific and Industrial Research.

"Probably no subject appeals so much to the popular imagination as scientific research. It produces in the minds of most of us a feeling of awe, and any exposition of scientific subjects leaves a realisation that we as individuals know very little after all.

"If life has often been blind to the possibilities of science, in its turn science has been a blind force in social life. Lauded on one side for the profusion with which it has showered its gifts on mankind it is regarded on the other with rising suspicion as a possible cause of social dislocation. Electric power, lighting, heating, traction, sound films, wireless—these and numerous other social amenities have been rendered possible by a single discovery in physical science, and they in their turn have produced far-reaching repercussions in the life of the community. They have compelled readjustments in modes of life, in habits of thought and in the cultivation of tastes. They have radically altered the incidence of employment and of production in all but the most agricultural of communities. They have altered the distribution of populations and stimulated the industrialisation of vast areas of the earth hitherto untouched by mechanisation and commerce.

"Since I have been associated with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research I have probed more deeply into scientific matters than ever before in my life. I have come to realise the vast amount of scientific knowledge and practical wisdom diffused throughout the world of which up till then I had been at best dimly aware, and to feel my own ignorance and limitations very acutely. What I have absorbed so far is very elementary, but I have become more than ever impressed with the fact that both our existing structure of civilisation and our hope of progress are based on science, and that the lack of appreciation and understanding of science among businessmen, financiers, educationists, politicians and administrators is a serious feature of our present situation.

"There seems an almost interminable conflict of opinion about the merits of scientific research; its revolutionary effect upon industry and its displacement of operatives have produced harsh feelings and harsh words. But we must develop scientific research to the highest pinnacle of perfection or as a nation we are doomed. Only through the development of scientific research can we hope to compete in the markets of the world, and the nation that neglects research must lag behind in the march of progress.

"Some say in defiance, 'What was good enough for our fathers is good enough for us.' That is very likely to be true, but it would not be good enough for the fathers if they were still alive. The



## ADMINISTRATIVE

energy and the wit which made them into what they were would by now be making them into something else.

"To take the science of food as an example. Food is not merely a social need, it is a biological one. All the same, as society grows in size and complexity, the needs connected with food get more varied and more elaborated. The result is that competition has sharpened the premium on certain kinds of improvements at every stage of the business—the making of new varieties of food plants and food animals, the techniques of growing and rearing them, their storage and preservation in transit, and at every point science is being called in to help in making these improvements.

"Would that I could go back to the Abbé Mendel's garden in the monastery, Brno, in Czechoslovakia, and trace developments in agriculture since then, but I have not the time, nor have you the patience to listen to me.

"Some say: 'What is the use of producing more mutton and beef and wheat?' My reply is that our overseas commitments must be met by export of these commodities. Moreover, in this country we have an obligation to develop its resources. If we do not, the time will come when we cannot continue to hold it.

"Much could be said about science and health. People are very prone to take things for granted in matters of health, both in regard to the treatment of disease and the day-to-day business of keeping well, and so you sometimes find a tendency to grumble at what science has not done in this supremely important field, instead of being thankful for what it has done.

"What it has done already is something pretty revolutionary. Let me tell you of some of its achievements. Before the nineteenth century there were no anæsthetics. People were often made drunk before an operation, and even then generally had to be held down while the sawing and cutting were going on. The pain and shock were so great that patients sometimes died of it. With the progress of chemistry, chloroform was discovered, and other anæsthetics, such as ether, laughing gas, and so on. Their general introduction into surgical practice was undoubtedly one of the biggest steps ever taken to alleviate human suffering. Much more could be said about science and health, but already I have digressed from my subject, which is some of the work which the C.S.I.R. has done.

"If I had time I could describe to you a rather amusing piece of work carried out by the Wool Research Association at Torridon, Leeds, which started with a complaint from a woman who had been cooking and whose jumper changed colour only on the front—the side towards the heat—which led to improved methods of preventing white flannels from turning yellow.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

"In previous broadcast addresses I have told you something of the scientific giants of the past who paved the way to more recent discoveries, and to whom the world owes an everlasting debt of gratitude—men such as Faraday, Clerk Maxwell, Pasteur and others.

"The scientist must be a contented man; he must be satisfied to find that contentment within himself. He pursues his way unobtrusively, perhaps making discoveries which mean millions to mankind, without public applause or pecuniary benefit, and frequently taunted. In contradistinction to the scientist there is, shall we say, the comedian who sings a funny song and is rewarded by public applause and often by large pecuniary benefit. Science is an ill-paid and poorly recognised profession when comparisons of this kind are drawn.

"To return to the main subject of my address, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research has been organised in the following groups or sections:—

1. Plant industry;
2. Economic entomology;
3. Animal health;
4. Animal nutrition;
5. Soils and irrigation;
6. Forest products;
7. Preservation and transport of foodstuffs;
8. Other investigations, including fisheries investigations, mineragraphic investigations and radio research.

I will deal with developments and some of the results in this order.

"A very interesting stage has been reached in tobacco investigations. It has been found that tobacco seedlings subjected to vapour from benzol during night time do not develop blue mould, which is so serious a hindrance to the development of the tobacco growing industry. Large-scale trials are in progress, and if they confirm the results of the work already done at Canberra, tobacco growers will be able to obtain supplies of disease-free seedlings, and the discovery will be of outstanding value to the industry. Very satisfactory progress has been made in the work which is being conducted, with a view to obtaining some chemical explanation of undesirable aroma in Australian tobacco.

"The council's investigations into weed problems have hitherto been confined mainly to entomological control methods—that is, the introduction and distribution of insects which attack the plants in other countries. Comprehensive reports on the whole position were prepared by officers of the council and were considered by the Standing Committee on Agriculture and by the Australian Council of Agriculture. As a result, steps have been



## ADMINISTRATIVE

taken to extend the scope of the work on the control of certain weeds, such as skeleton weed, Noogoora burr, Bassia, Bathurst burr, ragwort and nut grass, and to undertake investigations of an ecological and agrostological character, with a view particularly to obtaining control by such methods as pasture management and the competition of useful plants which smother or crowd out the weeds. The work is being carried out in close co-operation with the State departments concerned. As regards the lantana pest, an officer has been sent to Fiji to conduct investigations into certain insects which control the pest in that country and to obtain supplies of them for testing out in Australia.

"As a result of funds being made available by the Australian Dairy Cattle Research Association and the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments, investigations have been initiated into contagious bovine mastitis—commonly described as hardening of the udder—a serious disease which is prevalent in dairy herds not only in Australia, but throughout the world. Although investigations have been conducted in different countries, the problem in many of its aspects has not been elucidated. In order exhaustively to study the problem arrangements have been made with the University of Melbourne for laboratory accommodation to be provided at the Veterinary Research Institute, and a dairy farm has been secured about 30 miles from Melbourne for field experimental work.

"Investigations on the sheep blowfly problem have been directed mainly towards the discovery of means of preventing the attack on sheep by blowflies, but the problem of cleaning up blowfly strikes has received considerable attention, and as a result a very satisfactory glycono-boric acid dressing has been prepared and is being placed on the market by commercial interests. The new dressing is a colourless, odourless, rather viscous fluid which is easily rubbed into the shorn area of a strike and adheres readily to the fleece and skin. The maggots are killed and the extension of damage to the skin is immediately arrested; inflamed, but unbroken, skin becomes soft, flexible and healthy without any sign of crust. As hydrolysis of the dressing proceeds, a fine deposit of boric acid is left over the skin surface. So far it has been found impossible to produce an experimental re-strike on a dressed area.

"Striking advances with respect both to the scientific aspects of the work and to the practical application of the results have been made in the investigations into contagious pleuro-pneumonia of cattle, a disease which is of immediate importance in the northern cattle belt of Australia, though there is continuous danger of its spread to other parts. A very satisfactory artificial culture has been devised, and it has been shown that vaccination with it



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

confers a very definite immunity. Experiments are now in progress in order to determine the duration of the immunity conferred. As is well known, cattle may actually be infected with pleuropneumonia and yet show no obvious symptoms. Such animals very often act as carriers of the disease. The development of a test which will enable them to be diagnosed is, therefore, of the utmost importance, particularly when it is desired to eradicate the disease from a herd when cattle are transferred from one district to another. Such a test has been developed by the council's investigators at Townsville, and its value has been demonstrated not only at the Townsville laboratory but also at the veterinary laboratories of the States of New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia. When properly conducted by skilled operators, the test has a reliability approaching 100 per cent. There is now considerable reason for believing that it may be practicable within a few years to eradicate pleuro-pneumonia from Australian herds.

"Useful progress has been made in the investigation of internal parasites of sheep at the McMaster Animal Health Laboratory at Sydney. Experiments have amply confirmed the importance of adequate nutrition as a preventive, and it has been demonstrated that the withholding of food and water prior to drenching with specific drugs is unnecessary. New and more effective methods of administering anthelmintics have been devised. In particular, the discovery of the effect of solutions of copper sulphate has led to important advances. This discovery has attracted a great deal of attention in other countries and is being widely applied.

"In previous broadcasts information was furnished regarding the highly successful investigations carried out by the council into the problem of black disease of sheep, from which the loss in the principal States affected (New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania) was estimated at £1,000,000 per annum. The preventive measures devised and recommended by the investigators are now being practised regularly by stockowners. The vaccine is manufactured commercially by the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories and is in general use on many properties.

"Interesting and valuable developments have resulted from the investigations into the so-called 'coast disease' problem in sheep, a disease which affects large areas of high rainfall country, comprising over 2,000 square miles in South Australia alone, and extending to Victoria, Western Australia and King Island. The results of the experiments clearly indicated that the disease is due to a shortage of some element necessary for the production of blood. Field experiments had shown that impure iron oxide in the form of limonite would bring about some benefit. Limonite



## ADMINISTRATIVE

also contains many other elements in small quantities. Cobalt is almost invariably associated with it. The investigations are not yet completed, but it appears not unlikely that the discovery of the highly beneficial effects of administering minute quantities of cobalt to affected animals may not only lead to the solution of the coast-disease problem, but may also throw considerable light on other nutritional disorders of stock.

"The University of Melbourne has offered to the council the hospitality of the Veterinary Research Institute at Melbourne for the purpose of investigations into animal health problems, and the council has accepted this offer and hopes to be able to obtain funds for the erection and equipment of additional laboratories for bacteriological and pathological investigations.

"The investigations into the problem of the most economic and efficient methods of feeding sheep in times of drought have now reached a stage at which they point the way to practical application. Net energy values have been worked out for different foods, such as lucerne, hay, maize, wheat, oats and various concentrates, so that, according to market values and cost of transport, the most economic rations necessary to provide the requisite energy for the maintenance of the sheep can be determined.

"During the past year progress was made in the soil survey work, particularly in New South Wales and Victoria. The survey of the whole of the irrigated areas in the Murray River Valley will be completed in about two years' time. It is satisfactory to know that very considerable use is being made of the results of the soil surveys not only by State irrigation authorities, but also by local committees and individual settlers. The surveys form the basis for the elucidation of many problems associated with water-logging, fertiliser trials, the planning of drainage systems, the opening of further areas for settlement, etc.

"Arrangements have been made for an officer to conduct a survey of the drift of soil in the arid and semi-arid parts of Australia, initially in certain districts of South Australia. In certain parts the problem has reached somewhat alarming proportions. Extensive areas have already been abandoned owing to soil drift, whilst in other parts there has been a very marked decrease in stocking capacity.

"A new laboratory is being built for the Forest Products Division. The Victorian Government has made available a valuable site in South Melbourne for the new laboratory, and Mr. W. R. Grimwade, the chairman of the Victorian State Committee of the council, has made a generous gift of £5,000 for additional plant and equipment for that laboratory.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

"As a result of the investigations by this division, kiln seasoning of timber is being rapidly extended throughout the Commonwealth. During the year the total number of plants at which kilns, veneer driers or drying-rooms were operated increased by over 25%. Most of the units were built according to plans and specifications supplied by the division. Results of considerable practical value have already been obtained from the investigations into methods for the preservation of telegraph poles and railway sleepers, fence posts, marine piles, etc. Valuable results have also been obtained from the investigations into the utilisation of Australian timbers, wood structure, timber mechanics, wood chemistry, timber physics, etc.

"Consequent on the special grant of £2,000 per annum for five years the investigations into the preservation and transport of oranges have been extended, and investigations are being conducted on uniform lines at Newcastle, Melbourne and Griffith. Arrangements have been made with certain shipping companies for experimental consignments to be sent to England, and the British Food Investigation Board is co-operating in the examination of the fruit on arrival in England.

"Investigations in co-operation with the Victorian Department of Agriculture into the storage and ripening of pears have reached a stage at which it is possible to indicate fairly precisely the conditions to be maintained in order to ensure a good out-turn of the fruit on arrival in Great Britain. The laboratory investigations have been extended to experimental shipments, which have amply confirmed the results obtained by land storage experiments. Valuable information has been obtained both in the laboratory and by means of small experimental shipments to Great Britain regarding the influence of maturity at the time of picking on the keeping quality of Washington navel oranges. These results have an important bearing on the growth of what appears to be an essential export trade.

"Further investigations in connection with the preparation and storage of chilled beef have yielded valuable data concerning the relationship between the initial contamination by micro-organisms responsible for spoilage of chilled beef and the extent and activity of that fraction of the micro-organisms in soil which can grow readily at temperatures of the order of 30° F. From micro-biological examinations of the soil from any locality in Queensland and Northern Australia it is now possible to predict with a reasonable degree of accuracy the probable average storage life of chilled beef prepared in that locality at the time of the collection of the soil samples.

"The council is making arrangements to build in Australia an



## ADMINISTRATIVE

exploratory fisheries vessel to be used particularly for the purpose of ascertaining the commercial possibilities of utilising in Australian waters types of nets used elsewhere for catching surface-swimming fish. A beginning is also to be made on studies of methods for preservation of fish not only by quick freezing methods, but also by canning, smoking, curing, etc., and for the utilisation of non-edible fish for the manufacture of fish meal, etc., for use as a fertiliser. Attention will also be given to marine biological investigations for the purpose of ascertaining accurate information regarding the habits and life-histories of the more important species of edible fish. The value of Australian production of fish is about £1,250,000 per annum, imports total in value about £1,000,000 per annum, and the consumption of fish in Australia is about 9 lb. per capita, compared with about five times that quantity consumed in Great Britain.

"Another new development as the result of a special grant by the Commonwealth Government is that investigations are being undertaken by the council, in co-operation with the Department of Metallurgy, University of Melbourne; the School of Mines and Industries, Adelaide, and the School of Mines, Kalgoorlie, into the most suitable and economical methods of treatment of gold-bearing ores. The fact that these facilities are highly appreciated by the mining industry is evident from the large number of samples which have been submitted for examination. The work is actively in progress at the three centres mentioned and a large number of ores have already been examined.

"The council is giving further consideration to the question of whether any good purpose would be served by the re-examination of the present position of the Australian rabbit problem. Many reports on the matter, published by State organisations and others, are available. There has, however, during recent years been an accumulation of practical experience, and the council decided to seek from certain representative pastoralists authoritative statements of the conclusions to which experience has led them. These statements have been published in the council's quarterly journal. Investigations into a virus disease known as myxomatosis are being conducted on behalf of the council by Sir Charles Martin at Cambridge. The results so far obtained are promising. If the work proceeds satisfactorily it is proposed to import the virus into Australia and to make arrangements for its culture and for the maintenance of the most virulent strains. When that has been done consideration will probably be given to the question of conducting a large-scale experiment, for which purpose the use of a small island may have to be obtained.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

"The present Commonwealth Government is giving tangible expression to its recognition of the value of scientific research by making increasingly greater sums available for this work from year to year. A sum of less than £95,000 was provided for 1934-35, as compared with over £122,000 for 1935-36. These sums were supplemented by grants from outside sources amounting to over £56,000 for 1935-36, and approximately £35,000 for 1934-35. The council will actually have available from Government and other sources a total of nearly £175,000 to cover its work during the current financial year. It is pleasing to me, as the Minister in charge, to note the wider recognition of the value of scientific research by industry. The increased contributions speak for themselves, but there is still room for some expansion of this recognition.

"I hope what I have said will give listeners some idea of what the C.S.I.R. is doing. When we take into consideration also the great work done by science in clearing the original growth from practically the whole of the prickly pear infested area of some 50 million acres, of which 12 to 15 million acres have now been thrown open to settlement, and other achievements in respect of which time will not permit discussion, the value of research becomes apparent to us all. Scientific research is the best national investment we have. By the expenditure of a few hundred thousand pounds economic advantages amounting to many millions of pounds have been obtained for Australia."

The Forest Products Laboratory of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research was opened by me on the 7th April, 1937.

I opened Station 3WV, the Western Victorian regional transmitter situated at Dooen, in the Wimmera, over the air.

Addresses were also given at the opening of the sixth convention of the Australian Federation of Broadcasting Stations, where I mentioned that, like the press, radio was to become one of the "estates of the realm," and at the opening of the Bathurst Broadcasting Station over the air on the 1st January, 1937.

Metalliferous mining engaged my attention and I addressed the conference of this body.

I attended on the occasion of the opening of the new Commonwealth Bank premises in Adelaide in 1935.



## ADMINISTRATIVE

I delivered a broadcast talk on Adam Lindsay Gordon and received quite a bevy of messages thanking me and voicing regrets that I did not quote more of his verse:—

### ADAM LINDSAY GORDON

(Broadcast Talk, 24th June, 1938.)

By Senator the Hon. A. J. MacLachlan

"To-day is the anniversary of the death of Adam Lindsay Gordon, and the thoughts of all who love his poetry (and is there any Australian who does not love it?) will turn to the beauty and philosophy of this interpreter of life who was described by Marcus Clarke as 'the inaugurator of a national school of Australian poetry'—the man who 'sang the first great songs these lands can claim to be their own.'

"Every year on June the 24th there is a pilgrimage of Gordon lovers to his grave in Brighton Cemetery, Victoria, where that broken column at its head tells of the life that was so full of beauty and action and was cut so short. It is fitting that we should tune in with some tribute to the work of one who is regarded as our greatest Australian poet. There was a strange and splendid fire in his life, and there runs a true Australian fire through his verse, and with it a rhythm that reflects the very beauty of his soul.

"What is poetry? How are we to measure the true poet? Josh Billings, if you remember, had no difficulty in settling that question to his own satisfaction. 'My idea of first-rate poetry,' he said, 'is the kind of poetry I would have writ.' But there are others whose views are entitled to more serious consideration. Shelley has defined a poem as the very image of life expressed in its external truth . . . 'the Divinity of the Arts.' Aristotle tells us that the aim of poetry is to give delight; and Matthew Arnold, in his famous 'Essay on Poetry,' argues that its chief function is the criticism of life. And I am tempted here to refer to his famous lines which deplore the loss to mankind:

When the head  
Of a sacred poet lies low  
In an age which can rear them no more.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

"Life has changed. We live in an age of noise and hustle and speed, but if modern conditions do not tend to *encourage* the writing of great poetry, great poetry is, nevertheless, being written, and I should be very sorry indeed to think that there will ever be an age which can rear them no more. One need only mention the poetry of the late Christopher J. Brennan, of Shaw Neilson, of McCrae, of Fitzgerald to show that the art of writing poetry has not been lost to Australia since Gordon died; and here I would like to quote from Henry Kendall's beautiful 'In Memoriam' on the death of Adam Lindsay Gordon:

At rest! Hard by the margin of that sea  
Whose sounds are mingled with his noble verse  
Now lies the shell that never more will house  
The fine strong spirit of my gifted friend.  
Yea, he who flashed upon us suddenly,  
A shining soul with syllables of fire,  
Who sang the first great songs these lands can claim  
To be their own; the one who did not seem  
To know what royal place awaited him  
Within the Temple of the Beautiful,  
Has passed away.  
..... the brave, great soul  
That never told a lie, or turned aside  
To fly from danger—he, I say, was one  
Of that bright company this sin-stained world  
Can ill afford to lose.

"Gordon was a poet and philosopher, policeman and politician. Of the events during his life in the two latter capacities I shall say but little. To sketch his career in tabloid form for those who may be unfamiliar with the man's real life is part of my aim this evening, but chiefly I desire to induce an even greater interest by the Australian public—great as that interest already is—in the beauty of his poetical works.

"Born in the Azores of Scottish parentage, Gordon was educated at Cheltenham and Woolwich and kept term at Merton College, Oxford. No outstanding feature of his youth presents itself on the educational side, except an inordinate love for the classics. He seems to have distinguished himself in the capacity of horseman and in many forms of open-air sport. Notwithstanding his impaired vision, he excelled as a youth in the use of his hands, and he gave proof of it afterwards in Australia. His great length



## ADMINISTRATIVE

of limb served to advantage him in personal contests. Unhappy events in his career led to his migration to Australia at the age of twenty. With obvious regret, he parted from friends and family, and took ship to Adelaide, South Australia. There may have contributed to this decision a disappointment in a love affair. Need I remind you of those lines "To My Sister," with all their exquisite pathos, which were written by Gordon on 4th August, 1853, three days before he sailed to Australia? Let me quote a few of those lines:—

Across the trackless seas I go,  
No matter when or where,  
And few my future lot will know,  
And fewer still will care.  
My hopes are gone, my time is spent,  
I little heed their loss,  
And if I cannot feel content,  
I cannot feel remorse.

Oh, time glides ever quickly by!  
Destroying all that's dear;  
On earth there's little worth a sigh,  
And nothing worth a tear!

"Gordon's was a proud and sensitive soul; and we discern too in those early lines something of that melancholy spirit which he inherited from his mother, and which was to become more manifest towards the end of his life in Australia.

"Three days after his arrival, and without presenting his letters of introduction, he enlisted, and was accepted, as a mounted trooper in the service of the South Australian Government. Within ten days of his arrival he was equipped, sworn in and posted to the South-East District. He was attracted, no doubt, to police service by the spice of danger, by the free life, and by the fact that he would have horses at his disposal. According to his cousin, Miss Frances Gordon, 'he went to Australia because he was a courageous, romantic and adventurous young man whose mind was inflamed with the stories of the great gold rush. He said, as it were, to himself, "Australia is the place for me."' However, we find him in the South Australian Police Force, and not on the goldfields; and many accounts remain in the South-East District of his daring, his expert horsemanship and his intrepidity both in the dangerous



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

work of arresting criminals and in crossing what was then bush country. He visualises the life in 'Wolf and Hound':—

Woods to the east and wolds to the north  
In the sundown sullenly bloom'd;  
Dead black on a curtain of crimson cloth  
Large peaks to the westward loomed.

Flash! flash! bang! bang! and we blazed away,  
And the grey roof reddened and rang;  
Flash! flash! and I felt his bullet flay  
The tip of my ear. Flash! bang!  
Bang! flash! and my pistol arm fell broke;  
I struck with my left hand then—  
Struck at a corpse through a cloud of smoke—  
I had shot him dead in his den!

Perhaps that is not great poetry, but it's great and adventurous life! There is *power* in it—*descriptive* power—and a vividness of action such as characterises most of his verse. It is Gordon in his dramatic and *adventurous* mood. We must look elsewhere for his philosophical and calmer reflections. Whatever else we may say about it, there is no denying that he brings the scene in that lonely bush cave most vividly before our eyes. Australia's bush is lonely, and especially must Gordon have found it so in those days after his English life; and it played its part, no doubt, in inducing that melancholia to which he was by nature prone. Few of us will agree with his description of Australia as a land

where bright blossoms are scentless,  
And songless bright birds;"

nevertheless, none will deny his descriptive power in portraying our bush scenery and life, our dawns and our dusks.

"The discipline of police service irked him and he resigned his position in 1855. It was during this period that the poet formed a close attachment with William Trainer, who, after Gordon's death, supplied to his many admirers various stories of his escapades.

"Gordon's next adventure was that of horse-breaker for the Indian market. Horsemen made strong appeal to him, and it was whilst he was mounted constable that he first encountered one who later became one of Australia's leading jockeys, Thomas Hales. Indeed, it may have been from Gordon, who was afterwards associated with Hales at Lake Hawdon, that the famous jockey learned the first elements of horsemanship.

"It was during this period also that he made the acquaintance of the Rev. Julian Tenison Woods, with whom he became very



## ADMINISTRATIVE

friendly, and the use of whose library of classical works was much appreciated by one thirsting for classical learning.

"Gordon appears to have moved about the south-east of South Australia and wandered frequently near the towering cliffs of Cape Northumberland—'only the crag and cliff to nor'ward.' It was there, at Dingley Dell, half a mile from Cape Northumberland, that he settled when he married at the age of 29. The cottage where he then lived is still standing, preserved by the people of South Australia as a national pleasure resort.

"A fearless horseman, Gordon travelled across country, not deigning to look for gaps; and it was in this district, on the edge of the Blue Lake, that he made his memorable leap from the road to the edge of a chasm which forms a side of the lake. The memorial erected to Gordon for that feat overlooks the site of the actual position, and sightseers who pass that queen of lakes can still have the actual point shown to them.

"Suffering a severe accident in 1862, he married the lady who attended him, and who for many years survived him. In 1864 he inherited, on the death of his mother, some £7,000 and invested it in various properties in South and Western Australia.

"Through the courtesy of Miss Dircksey Cowan, honorary keeper of records of the Western Australian Historical Society, in Perth, I have received some interesting information concerning Gordon's arrival and sojourn in the western State. The greater part of this information has been collated by Mr. and Mrs. T. H. Ilbery, two great lovers of the poetry of Adam Lindsay Gordon.

"It appears that Gordon and his friend, Lambton Mount, together with a Mr. John Peaks, who for many years resided near Northam, left Williamstown, Victoria, in the sailing ship *Clutha*, taking with them over 4,000 merino sheep and 800 Leicester sheep. They arrived at Bunbury on 11th December, 1866.

"The venture was not a success. The sheep were finally moved to Mount Leeuwin, on the Donnelly River, where a freehold block was bought and 50,000 acres pastoral lease taken up. Still, fortune did not favour him, and after a wet winter only 1,300 sheep could be mustered. Discouraged and dispirited, Gordon returned to the eastern States, riding overland as far as Albany and there taking ship.

"An interesting story concerning Gordon in the West relates to a poem that was found in an old pair of Gordon's trousers. I tell it in the words of Mr. and Mrs. Ilbery: 'Though not generally known,' they tell us, 'prior to leaving Western Australia for good, he requested Mr. Mount to destroy, without reading, a whole portmanteauful of manuscript, written chiefly on lined blue foolscap. One poem alone seems to have escaped, and that was found by a



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

shepherd in the pocket of an old pair of Gordon's trousers, given him by Mount after Gordon had left Western Australia. It is incomplete, unrevised, and in places the manuscript is indistinct. Commencing,

All night I've heard the marsh frogs croak;

The jay's rude matins now prevail,

it describes an incident when mustering scrub cattle, which were plentiful in the district at that time.'

"On returning to South Australia, Gordon was induced by influential citizens in the south-east to offer himself as a candidate for the district of Victoria, in opposition to the then Attorney-General, the Hon. Randolph Stow. The people wanted a local man. This district extended over the whole of South Australia which lies south of the Murray and up to the Victorian border. Gordon defeated Stow by a margin of three votes, and he and his wife removed to Adelaide to reside. He still clung to the seaside.

"But the political atmosphere was not made for Gordon. He delivered one great classical and rhetorical oration, but he soon tired of Parliament. He longed for the life of the country; he was 'crying aloud for the land.' Here is a bit of one of his stray verses, entitled 'The Lay of the Last Squatter':—

And I guess it's all UP with the squatter;

The people are crying aloud for the land;

They've made it hot, and they'll find it hotter

When they plough the limestone and sow the sand.

'All flesh is grass,' so saith the preacher;

'All grass is ours,' quoth Randolph Stow;

Is the man related to Harriet Beecher?

With *mobile vulgus* he's all the go.

And years to come, in the book of Hansard,

You may read the tale of the frogs retold,

How they prayed for a king, how their prayer was answered,

How the king was crowned, and the frogs were sold.

"Some of Gordon's stray verse appeared during these years in 'Bell's Life in Victoria,' others in the 'Australasian,' and they attracted the attention of the public. Whilst he was in Parliament his various investments in the south-east of South Australia and elsewhere had turned out badly. He had no business acumen. In an endeavour to pull together the remnants of his legacy, he returned to Mount Gambier. He was then 33 years of age. Then, his fortunes having declined, he went to Victoria and took over the livery stables attached to Craig's Hotel at Ballarat.

"If he was not a success in politics, this cannot be said of his



## ADMINISTRATIVE

career in horse-racing. In Adelaide he won the Grand National on Cadger. In Ballarat he won the local steeplechase on Ballarat. But his chief claim to fame in this connection is that he created a record on 10th October, 1868, by winning three steeplechases in the one afternoon, two of them on horses he himself owned. It was on his ability as a rider, and not on his books of verse, that he depended for a living. In March, 1870, he was thrown twice in one race and sustained internal and head injuries which, no doubt, hastened his death. It was in June of that year that his 'Bush Ballads and Galloping Rhymes' came from the publisher—and with it also came a note informing him of his liability in connection with the publication! Such is—or was—the lot of poets. Let us hope they are luckier in these days!

"I wish I had time to say more. I wish time permitted me to quote from some of his most notable poems, such as 'Thora's Song' and 'Ashtaroth.' In much of his verse there is a strain of sadness, but in his descriptive action in 'Ashtaroth' there is a vividness that should make strong appeal, and I have frequently wondered why no effort has been made to film this work.

"Every country youth in Australia is familiar with the more dashing verse of Adam Lindsay Gordon—'How We Beat the Favourite,' 'The Swimmer,' 'The Sick Stockrider,' 'From the Wreck,' and the rest of them. I hope that, as they grow older, they will not neglect the other poems, with all their music, art and beauty.

The ex-Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honorable R. B. Bennett (afterwards Lord Bennett, whose demise we deeply deplore), visited this country in 1936. The Victorian Chamber of Manufactures decided to entertain the distinguished visitor, and in associating myself with the toast of Mr. Bennett's health, I delivered a speech and concluded with a quotation from the Canadian poet, Bliss Carman, as follows:—

O, England, little mother by the sleepless northern tide  
Having bred so many nations to devotion, trust and pride,  
Very tenderly we turn  
With willing hearts that yearn  
Still to fence you and defend you; let the sons of men discern  
Wherein our right and title, might and majesty reside.

This perceptibly touched Mr. Bennett, who stood strongly for a unified Empire.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

One was constantly called upon to attend various civic functions, and spent many a pleasant luncheon hour with various Lord Mayors. I opened the Station 2HR at Lawrence, in the neighbourhood of Grafton, in 1936, and was accorded a reception at the hands of the civic dignitaries of that city, which may well be regarded as one of Australia's garden plots.



## POETRY

I GAVE several addresses on poetry, sometimes confining myself to Australian authors and sometimes dealing with British verse, and I was moved to do this from the fact that—

'Tis education forms the common mind;  
Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclin'd.

At the moment we seem to have been submerged in a wave of commonplace, and in some instances, trashy literature. I cull some quotations that I have still kept by me which may induce some reader to resort to what I have always found the soothing delight of reading good poetry.

I tried to awaken the sleeping poetic Australian soul by various radio addresses and speeches from time to time. The following is an extract from one of them:—

"Quite recently there flashed upon us suddenly an artist, hitherto unknown, whose work electrified the connoisseurs of Australian painting. Beauty and art are essential to the make-up and culture of a nation, and associated with this artistic sense is a beauty in language and diction which makes appeal to all. It is in an endeavour to arouse an interest in our Australian verse that I propose to offer you a few gleanings from some of our Australian songsters. Poetry is usually characteristic of a people. It is also characteristic of the countryside. Australia is a land of action, young and virile, and is it to be wondered that the verse of the country to commend itself to the people is that which portrays action? The popularity of the stirring lines of Gordon and of 'The Man From Snowy River' is due largely to this, and the inherent love of the Australian for the horse. While our scenery in the main may have a depressing effect, there is some bright descriptive verse of Australian origin. That Australian verse at times should savour of some particular master of English verse is not surprising. Some of the English masters in turn might be said to savour of the Spring of the Muses."



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

I quoted from Brunton Stephens the lines from "The Dominion of Australia," written in 1877, when he unfolds his dream of a federated Australia:—

She waits the incorporating word  
To bid her tremble into form.  
Already, like divining-rods, men's souls  
Bend down to where the unseen river rolls.

I quoted from Banjo Patterson, from Lindsay Gordon, from Will H. Ogilvie, and those delightful lines of Dorothea Mackellar's from "My Country," where she sings her love of—

The tragic ring-barked forests,  
Stark white beneath the moon,  
The sapphire-misted mountains,  
The hot gold hush of noon.

and vows—

Though earth holds many splendours,  
Wherever I may die,  
I know to what brown country  
My homing thoughts will fly.

Progressive as the age is, and fascinating in many branches of science, as far as literature is concerned it is virtually barren in comparison with either the great Elizabethan age or the early Victorian period, and one might well exclaim with Arnold:—

. . . . . when the head  
Of a sacred poet lies low,  
In an age which can rear them no more.

Notwithstanding the fact that a politician was defined in "Hamlet" as "one that would circumvent God"—and I have no doubt there are many modern illustrations of the truth of this remark—I felt that poetry was the divinity of the arts and that the Australian mind, although realistic



## POETRY

and materialistic to a degree, should be encouraged to study poetry as "the very image of life expressed in its external truth."

I frequently referred to the lofty, challenging and powerful sentiments expressed in Shakespeare's works, so logical and so trenchant. One might call his works the spring of English literature, which Pope called Homer:—

Be Homer's works your study and delight,  
Read them by day, and meditate by night;  
Thence form your judgment, thence your maxims bring,  
And trace the Muses upward to their spring.

The deeds of men hurry away and are pushed into oblivion by the works of their successors, but from the earliest dawn of civilisation poetry endured for the preservation of certain relations and the combination of all forms of beauty and pathos. It is really a criticism of life itself.

We are the music-makers,  
And we are the dreamers of dreams,  
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,  
And sitting by desolate streams;  
World-losers and world-forsakers  
Of whom the pale moon gleams;  
Yet we are the movers and shakers  
Of the world for ever, it seems."

—Arthur O'Shaughnessy.

I quoted samples of onomatopœic verse, and gave the excellent illustration to be found in Pope. After saying "the sound must seem an echo to the sense," he proceeds to illustrate it:—

Soft is the strain when zephyr gently blows,  
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;  
But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,  
The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar.  
When Ajax strives some rocks' vast weight to throw,  
The line, too, labours and the words move slow:  
Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,  
Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the main.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

How true it is! And, even going back to Horace, we find in these sonorous lines—"Pallida mors aequo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas regumque turrets"—the truth of the fact that the "sound (does) seem an echo to the sense." Truly, it may be said that poetry is a spoken, and not a written, word.

The clangs and polluting noises of modern life are softened by resort to good poetry. It elevates and appeals to the higher senses. It consoles and soothes.

Shakespeare is practically current in our language and quite unacknowledged.

"The melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year," wrote W. C. Bryant in "The Death of the Flowers."

Byron and his "Childe Harold" referred to Rome as the "Lone mother of dead empires."

Goldsmith, speaking of the contentment of the retired man, said: "His heaven commences ere the world be pass'd!", and what delightful verse is conjured up by this sweet writer in reference to a cottage:—

The whitewashed wall, the nicely sanded floor,  
The varnished clock that clicked behind the door;  
The chest contrived a double debt to pay,  
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;  
The pictures placed for ornament and use,  
The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose.

How beautiful a picture from the every-day life and every-day surroundings! And then in his "Traveller" he quoted:—

Such is the patriot's boast, where'er we roam,  
His first, best country ever is at home.

How charming are the lines—

Calmly, as to a night's repose,  
Like flowers at set of sun.

—Fitz-Greene Halleck.

And Samuel Johnson, with his practical mind, added some



## POETRY

lines to Goldsmith's "Traveller," often quoted, but often disregarded:—

How small, of all that human hearts endure,  
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure.

Milton, notwithstanding what may be regarded as the heaviness of some of his verse, wrote some alluring and fascinating poetry:—

Jest and youthful Jollity,  
Quips and Cranks and wanton Wiles,  
Nods and Becks, and wreathèd Smiles.

Come and trip it as ye go,  
On the light fantastick toe.

And he referred to "The Mountain Nymph, Sweet Liberty."  
It is rather a pity we at times forget this.

I quoted from Tennyson some striking passages:—

So careful of the type she seems,  
So careless of the single life.

Although he never visited them, his description of the tropics I regarded as a masterpiece:—

The mountain wooded to the peak, the lawns  
And winding glades high up like ways to Heaven,  
The slender coco's drooping crown of plumes,  
The lightning flash of insect and of bird,  
The lustre of the long convolvuluses  
That coil'd around the stately stems, and ran  
Ev'n to the limit of the land, the glows  
And glories of the broad belt of the world, . . .

. . . . .  
The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean-fowl,  
The league-long roller thundering on the reef,  
The moving whisper of huge trees that branch'd  
And blossm'd in the zenith, or the sweep  
Of some precipitous rivulet to the wave.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

And his description of Cleopatra:—

I turning saw, throned on a flowery rise,  
One sitting on a crimson scarf unroll'd;  
A queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold black eyes,  
Brow-bound with burning gold.

I quoted Wordsworth:—

The innocent brightness of a new-born Day  
Is lovely yet;  
The Clouds that gather round the setting sun  
Do take a sober colouring from an eye  
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality.

And I rarerly forgot to quote that human poet, Burns:—

O wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us  
To see oursels as ithers see us!

I add one further quotation which seems appropriate in this age of the atom—a selection from “The Tempest”:—

Are melted into air, into thin air;  
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,  
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve;  
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,  
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff  
As dreams are made on; and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep.”

I made selections from Gray's “Elegy” and from my notes I notice I quoted on one occasion:—

Say not good-night,  
But in some brighter clime,  
Bid me good-morning.

—Anna Laetitia Barbauld.

On the principle that “little boats should keep close to the shore,” I refrained from a more classical touch, judging by my notes, for I regret to say that the manuscripts of these addresses, if there ever were any, I have mislaid.



## TRIBUTES

Time passes by, and friends and colleagues drop out of the arena. The death of Mr. C. A. S. Hawker was a great loss to South Australia; in fact, a loss to Australia. Possessed of a great mind, well read, and with a breadth of understanding, he was blessed with a calm judgment and great ability. His loss in the air disaster was felt not only by his colleagues but by every member of the House. I paid tribute to him in the Senate, and I paid it from the heart. It is as follows:—

“Air Disaster: Death of HONORABLE C. A. S. HAWKER  
(Oct., 1938).

“To-day we meet under the shadow of a great sorrow. An air tragedy far transcending in severity any that has hitherto occurred in Australia has deprived this country of many valuable lives. To the relatives and friends of those fine men and women who have been the victims of the tragedy, we extend our heartfelt sympathy. Amongst those who have lost their lives was a sitting member of the House of Representatives—I refer to the Honorable Charles Allan Seymour Hawker. By his ability, his probity and his broad-mindedness, Mr. Hawker endeared himself to us all. He entered the Commonwealth Parliament in 1929, when he was elected for the division of Wakefield, in South Australia. He was returned at the successive elections of 1931, 1934 and 1937. From January to April, 1932, he was Minister for Markets and Minister for Repatriation. In April of that year, when the title of the former department was altered, he became the first Minister for Commerce, and held that portfolio until his retirement from the Ministry in September, 1932.

“His courage on the battle-fields of France was just what one would expect of Charles Hawker. Enlisting in August, 1914, with the British Army, he saw service in France and Belgium from 1915 to 1917. Thrice wounded in battle, his gallant heart would, I feel sure, have urged him on to complete the task to which he had set himself when he enlisted, but his wounds were of a character which prevented further service. He was invalided from the Army with



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

the rank of captain. Personally, I mourn his loss. I was privileged to be a personal friend and his colleague in the Cabinet of which he was a member. I know of his fine qualities of heart and mind. Deeply appreciative of the magnitude of the problems confronting this country, he threw himself with characteristic energy into the task of seeking a solution to them. A good friend has gone to his reward. May he be long remembered. To his sorrowing mother, brothers and sisters, our hearts go out in their great bereavement, and, on behalf of honourable Senators, I desire to extend to them our sincere sympathy."

An ex-Senator in the person of Colonel James Rowell—one of the most sincere men, and a man devoted to the service of his country in every capacity, was a personal friend, and as a member of the Senate I voiced sentiments which I felt.

"Death of COLONEL JAMES ROWELL, C.B. (6th July, 1940)

"It would ill-become me, as one who knew the late Colonel Rowell for the best part of half a century, not to pay tribute to his memory, not for the official services that he rendered this country, not even for the distinguished military service that was mentioned by the Leader of the Government, but because he was a man—one of Nature's gentlemen—whom this country can ill-afford to lose. He was a well-known horticulturist and was a descendant of a family which had engaged in horticulture for centuries in the Old World. With his people he settled in South Australia. He was a perfect soul who never told a lie or turned away from danger. I pay my tribute to his memory. He was a man whom it was good to know."

Another colleague passed away during my last year of service. I frequently travelled with him. He had a tremendous knowledge of English verse, and as we hurried along by train to or from Canberra, engaged often in a game of bridge, he would say as we passed various cemeteries connected with the towns close by the line—

Each in his narrow cell forever laid,  
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.  
(Gray's "Elegy").

He loved the literature of his land, he delved into abstruse



## TRIBUTES

questions of law, particularly on the constitutional side, with great assiduity. I have known him so immersed in a question that he had forgotten the summoning of the Senate, and had to be reminded by his secretary, or someone else, that he was due to introduce some bill. His whimsical conversation was a sheer delight, and as I have indicated in the panegyric which I produce below, he has left behind fragrant memories.

“Death of the HONORABLE THOMAS CORNELIUS  
BRENNAN (3rd Jan., 1944).

“As a former colleague of the late ex-Senator Thomas Cornelius Brennan, I desire to pay my tribute to the memory of a man who endeared himself to all with whom he came in contact. He had decided views on most subjects, but in all his dealings he was the soul of honour. A master of literature, a master of his profession, and an authority on constitutional law, he was withal one of Nature’s gentlemen. The hand of the reaper has indeed been busy among former members of the Senate since we last met. We can only hope that when our time comes to depart this life we shall leave behind us memories as fragrant as those left by the late ‘Tom’ Brennan.”

I give these excerpts because they refer to men with whom I had been in close association, and men who scorned to do a dishonorable action.

We had perforce to pay tributes from time to time to some great one who had gone, with whom our personal contact had been casual, if indeed we had contacted him at all, but with regard to my friends whose names I have mentioned I spoke with sincerity, and probably was considerably moved.



## NATIONAL INSURANCE

FROM the very outset of my interest in politics I had taken an exceedingly keen interest in social insurance, or, as it is more commonly called, national insurance. Although not of a radical turn of mind, I felt that to the responsible individual the duty to his wife and family was always present, and the fear of leaving them, either through sickness or through death, unprovided for, was ever present. To the irresponsible this did not mean much, but to the man who takes his responsibilities seriously it meant a great deal, and for many years I had read with interest all the literature upon which I could lay my hands concerning the working of national insurance, and how best to appropriate the burden between the State, the employer, and the employee. Before even entering politics, I had acquired a considerable volume of knowledge from literature available, and this was added to by an old political friend, the Rt. Hon. W. A. Watt, who lent me some very sound German works, which had been translated into English, on this subject.

The advent of national insurance in England I hailed with some joy, and I constantly advocated its enactment in the Federal Parliament. The matter was little understood. The average employee was desirous of doing something. His cry was like the French "Sécurité," but he really did not see how to attain it, and so far as I can see in Australia's life to-day, he has failed to attain security.

To the irresponsible, and to the unthinking, an Act of Parliament providing for the payment of social benefits to the aged and infirm has presented as it were security in the true sense of the term. It is a mere delusion, or a sham. Governments, just as individuals, get into financial difficulties, and we know from experience what the consequences



## NATIONAL INSURANCE

of such difficulties are, how they are encountered from time to time, and how no fund, unless held outside political control, is sacrosanct.

We as a British race enjoy freedom in the true sense of the term. We seldom think of how it has been attained, of the centuries of effort that have enabled us to enjoy our present way of life, secured by various statutes with which no politician dare interfere. The judicial power stands above and beyond all as the defender of the liberties of the people, who, taking these things for granted, are easily deceived into believing that benefits in the way of finance can be secured to the individual by means of a statute providing annually, it may be, for certain payments or certain services. To my mind, the idea is quite fallacious, and any system of national insurance for age, health, or any kindred matter should be completely removed from political control, and vested in commissioners entirely independent of Parliament. Such broadly were my ideas on national insurance.

Throughout my political campaigns I have stood solidly for the enactment of some measure built upon the lines I have indicated, the control of the fund being put beyond the reach of needy Ministers of State in times of stress.

Shortly after my arrival in the Federal House I found that the matter had not escaped observation, but that there seemed to be a lack of information, a lack of statistics, and a lack of knowledge of how national insurance was really worked. A Royal Commission was appointed, evidence was taken throughout the length and breadth of Australia, and the friendly societies—the pioneers of the class of insurance that I had in mind—made their contribution to the knowledge acquired by the Commission. The statistics and their analyses gave rise to considerable discussion, and it was many years before an attempt was made to deal specifically with the question, which I regarded, and still regard, as of the first importance.

The matter had been worked on during the time of the Bruce-Page Government. Studies of various characters had



been embarked upon, and it was left to the Lyons administration to endeavour to give practical effect to the accumulated knowledge and the accumulated information that was available.

It was found necessary, in respect of various details of the measure, to solicit the services of British experts. They were readily made available, and in 1938 a Bill was finally produced, examined by Cabinet in great detail, and ultimately launched in the House of Representatives. It was the subject of much criticism—criticism from an angle which exposed a desire by its opponents to maintain in the future what only can be regarded as the corrupt practices of the past, leaving the rate of pension to Parliament, leaving it to the bounty of the politician to say what security would be provided for wife and children; leaving the politician to determine the quantum of pension. There were certain phases of the Bill which gave rise to some complaints by the Country Party as to the neglect of the more sparsely populated rural areas. An undertaking was unanimously given by the Government to deal with this position by a supplementary statute to which considerable thought had been given, but which could not be prepared in time for inclusion in the Bill.

I regarded the measure as the major matter embodied in the Government policy. It brought within its scope over 1,850,000 persons, and dealt with matters affecting 3,600,000 wives and children. It applied to the sick, the aged, and to the wives, widows and orphans of the workers, and touched persons in almost every walk of life. Very vigorous preparations were made, and explanatory notes were circulated to all members in the House of Representatives. Broadly, the Bill ensured weekly cash payments during sickness, known as sickness or disablement benefits, medical benefits, superannuation for insured persons, pensions for their widows, and pensions for their orphans, to the age of 15, and allowances in respect of dependent children under the age of 15 of persons receiving benefits under the measure. The charge for a weekly payment at the inception of the scheme in respect of



## NATIONAL INSURANCE

an employed man was to be 3/-, and in respect of an employed woman 2/-, the contribution to be shared weekly between the employer and the employee.

We had strong support in the fact that the International Labour Office at Geneva had stated that the replies of all governments indicated that the only effective basis for insuring the protection of the worker was the principle of compulsory and contributory insurance. A voluntary scheme would speedily become insolvent, as only either those with inferior lives, or the elderly, would be attracted by it. The Bill provided for medical benefit, sickness benefit, disablement benefit, additional benefits to the Old Age pensions, widows' pension, orphans' pension, and dependent child's allowance. The sickness and disablement benefits and the child's allowance and additional benefits were to be administered by the approved societies. The other benefits would be administered by a commission which would be in constant touch with the specialists of the approved societies.

While it was not proposed to reduce the rates of benefits, or alter the conditions for invalid or old age pensions, which had, in 1937-38, reached the astronomic figure of nearly £16,000,000, an estimate was given that in 40 years the old age and invalid pensions would exceed £32,000,000 per annum.

The Bill was introduced in the House of Representatives on the 4th May, 1938, and, notwithstanding a certain amount of well-devised opposition, not opposing the principles of the Bill, but rather seeking to deflect its incidence and revert practically in substance to the present practice, it was ultimately passed and received in the Senate on the 21st June, 1938, and I then proceeded with despatch to deal with the matter, sat the Senate continuously, and carried the second reading in the course of a couple of days.

I felt it incumbent upon me to get the measure through as the Senate would be reconstituted on the 30th June. The second reading was carried by keeping the Senate sitting



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

early and sitting late, and on the 23rd June, I replied to the debate on the second reading. The measure went into Committee, and as I would be embarrassed by any delay, the third reading was carried on the 30th June. I felt that something worth-while had been accomplished in the interests of a section of the people, who really were unable to voice their fears regarding the present methods of providing for old age and invalidism.

The measure, during its passage through the House of Representatives, received considerable attention at the hands of the Opposition, who apparently felt that they were being deprived of a valuable political cry at election time.

### NATIONAL HEALTH AND PENSIONS INSURANCE BILL 1938.

#### Second Reading.

Senator A. J. McLACHLAN:

This bill is probably one of the most important and far-reaching measures of social reform ever submitted for the consideration of this Parliament. The truth of this statement will become more apparent as I outline the scope of the bill and explain the principles upon which it is based.

But first let me state one or two principles which, I think, should be borne in mind in approaching the consideration of a measure of this kind. All will agree that it is essential for the maintenance and prosperity of a democratic country that its people should enjoy as great a measure of social security as it is possible to provide—security against the ills of the flesh to which we all are heir, security for their dependants in the case of premature death, and security against the vicissitudes of life in general. The peace of mind and contentment which result from the knowledge that a measure of security is provided cannot be overestimated. In the case of the working man—and I need hardly mention that working men constitute by far the greatest part of our population—the anxiety consequent on sickness cannot but have a depressing effect on him generally. The contingencies covered by the bill—namely, sickness, disablement, old age and widowhood—are those against which he is anxious to provide. With these contingencies provided for, I believe it may be safely asserted that, as the years go on, the improved outlook of



## NATIONAL INSURANCE

the working man will be reflected in his increased efficiency and his general happiness and contentment. There is another fact to which I think I should refer. It is that within the last 50 years the birth-rate in Australia has fallen by more than one-half. I may be asked what is the connection between birth-rate and social insurance. A report recently issued by Mr. Harold Butler, then Director of the International Labour Office in Geneva, suggests that the spread of social insurance may operate to check the restriction of the birth-rate by improving the prospects of social security. One of the reasons frequently advanced to explain a falling birth-rate is that parents are unwilling to bring children into a world where there is so little security for their future. One of the greatest fears of the married man is that, if anything should happen to him, he would leave a widow and young children unprovided for. While these circumstances persist, there will be the regrettable restriction of families that exists to such an extent in Australia at the present time. Anything that diminishes this sense of insecurity can hardly fail to counteract one at least of the causes of a falling birth-rate. It is difficult, in present circumstances, for many married men to make anything approaching reasonable provision for their families in the event of their death, but this is precisely one of the most important objects of a well-designed system of social insurance. The scheme we are now considering guarantees provision for life for the widows of insured persons, with allowances for their dependent children, of which the average capitalised value is approximately £700. Such a provision will give to many a family some degree of confidence in the future, and it is not too much to hope that it will be reflected in an ever-increasing birth-rate as the beneficent effects of the scheme become more generally enjoyed.

The magnitude of the scheme will be appreciated when it is considered that it brings directly within its scope over 1,850,000 persons, and affects, including wives and children, a total of no fewer than 3,600,000 persons, or about 52 per cent. of the people of Australia. It applies to the bread-winners, the sick, the aged, and the wives, widows and orphans of the workers, and it affects persons in every walk of life. The benefits for which the scheme makes provision are the following:—

Weekly cash payments during sickness, called in the bill “sickness benefit” or “disablement benefit.”

Free medical attendance and free medicines, called in the bill “medical benefit.”

Superannuation pensions for insured persons, life pensions for their widows, and pensions for their orphans up to the age of fifteen; and



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

Allowances for dependent children, under the age of fifteen, of persons receiving pensions or sickness or disablement benefits.

The contingencies to which I have referred are to some extent already met in various ways, but it is now recognised in nearly every country of the world that only under a national scheme of insurance, involving the co-operation of the government, the employer, and the employee, can a satisfactory and comprehensive scheme be devised for the protection of the wage-earners against the various misfortunes of life. Government systems, both Commonwealth and State, have already made generous provision for the sick, the needy, and the aged. The Commonwealth scheme of invalid and old age pensions is one of the most generous in the world. There are in our midst, however, persons depending on wages and salaries for their livelihood, who desire to provide some protection for themselves and their families, but they are unable to make this provision out of their limited resources. A typical case is that of a wage-earner afflicted with a long illness. By reason of loss of earnings and medical expenses, the savings of a life-time may be consumed and future earnings mortgaged. Should he die the widow and dependants may be left unprovided for. These cases are not necessarily covered by the present legislation, and it is for the purpose of meeting them that the scheme embodied in the bill has been presented. If the bill be passed, the individual, with the co-operation of the Government and his employer, will be able to provide some measure of protection for himself and his family.

The question of national insurance has been under consideration in this country for several years. A royal commission reported on it in 1925, and in 1928 a national insurance bill was introduced in the House of Representatives. The financial position since 1928 has not, I need hardly remind honourable Senators, been such as to encourage any government to venture on a scheme of the magnitude of a national health insurance scheme. The delay during the depression is understandable when it is realised that the scheme embodied in the present bill involves a total liability on the Australian nation of over £281,000,000. This amount is an inescapable liability, because under no circumstances must this scheme be allowed to become unsound from the actuarial point of view. I stress this figure, firstly, because of its magnitude, and, secondly, because it shows the impossibility of embarking on such a scheme except under more prosperous conditions than those which prevailed in the years subsequent to 1928. With the gradual improvements in the national finances the time again became opportune for the revival of the matter. And now, after due consideration, the Government has brought forward the plan contained in the measure at



## NATIONAL INSURANCE

present before us. In so acting, the Government has, I think, happily combined action with due consideration—a course which is counselled by Sir Arthur Salter in the following passage from his “Constructive Democracy”—

“I remember, when I was in China a few years ago, I was amazed at the enormous number of plans for financial and economic reform to which I was asked to add one more. They seemed to be always thinking, but never acting. When I came back here, we seemed to be always acting, but never thinking. I thought how good it would be if each could get a little of the other’s habits in that respect.”

The points I have mentioned emphasise the importance of the measure. Well might the Treasurer describe it as “one of the most far-reaching schemes of social reform that has been presented to the Federal Parliament.” It relieves the mind of the breadwinner; it makes provision for the sick and aged; it assists widows and orphans; and touches more closely the people of Australia than any other measure of social reform hitherto introduced. The measure now presented represents the major plank of Government policy enunciated at the recent election, and every effort has been made to place it before Parliament with the least possible delay. With the completion of the census recently, reliable information and statistics became available upon which to base calculations. The Government also had the advantage of the advice of expert and most experienced officers, whose knowledge was gained in a very practical way under the British scheme. The Government were guided also by the best actuarial advice that Australia could supply. Might I, at this juncture, be pardoned for paying a tribute to a colleague who has been able to prepare and submit to Cabinet such a comprehensive measure suitable to Australian conditions and modelled on, we believe, the best model of a health and pensions insurance scheme at present in existence? I refer to the British scheme.

Germany appears to have been the pioneer of the national system of insurance, but almost every country in the world to-day has a national scheme of insurance involving co-operation between the government, the employer and the employee. Honourable Senators are, no doubt, aware of the countries in which these schemes have been adopted. We, in Australia, are tuning in with the times, and I venture to think that as a result of this measure we shall assist in relieving the worries and anxieties of those who have the burden of family responsibility. It is not proposed to touch the provisions of our Invalid and Old-Age Pensions Act, but we shall introduce in this scheme a method whereby those who live prudently and save



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

for their old age will not be handicapped by the existence of a means test or any inquisition into their affairs. Some thousands of our people have endeavoured to provide against the risks of sickness, health and old age through the medium of various bodies. The friendly societies have played a not unimportant part in providing for the needs of the people, and are entitled to credit for so doing. Insurance companies, provident societies and some trade unions have made similar provision. There is evidence from the work done in this valuable way that there is a call for a national scheme. The greater part of our population remains unprotected, either for the reason that they are thoughtless of the future or because they are unable to make the necessary payments called for by the existing organisations.

One of the most serious problems the Commonwealth has to face is the rapid rise of costs under the present Invalid and Old-age Pensions Act. Thirty years ago the annual cost was about £1,400,000. Twenty years ago it was about £4,000,000. Ten years ago it was about £10,000,000. This year it will rise to about £15,800,000, and the actuaries estimate that, 40 years from now, the cost would amount to £32,000,000 a year. These disquieting increases in the annual burden are mainly due to the fact that the expectation of life of the people of Australia is steadily rising, whilst the birthrate has steadily fallen. The consequence is that the average age of our people is steadily rising, and it is estimated by the actuaries that 40 years hence the number of our people of pensionable age—women 60 years of age and over, and men 65 years of age and over—will have risen from the present figure of 590,000 to 1,280,000, an increase of 117 per cent. These are some of the vital considerations which have led the Government to frame this national insurance scheme.

Even after the introduction of this scheme, no reduction of the present costs of the existing invalid and old-age pension scheme can be anticipated, as any savings effected by the insurance scheme will be more than offset by the growth of the number of persons of pensionable age, a considerable proportion of whom, especially women, will not be covered by the insurance scheme.

Before outlining the scope of the scheme, I should like to put before honourable Senators the three main principles upon which a scheme of national insurance may be said to be based. The first main principle of national insurance is that, within the scope of the benefits to be provided, and the jurisdiction of the Government sponsoring it, the insurance shall be universal and compulsory. There may be exemptions where special classes have equivalent cover adequately guaranteed, but they will be exceptions. The object is



## NATIONAL INSURANCE

to guarantee a minimum of security in a certain field for those members of the community whose resources are inadequate to provide them on a voluntary basis. The second main principle is that it is insurance, and premiums are paid. As a rule, the classes of persons covered are confined to employees, and the contributions are shared between them and their employers, and these are subsidised by Government grants. The limitation to employees is in part due to the difficulties of determining the limits of earnings for other persons, and of collecting compulsory contributions from them. Voluntary insurance is allowed to persons who have been compulsorily insured, and in Great Britain a supplementary system of voluntary insurance for self-employed persons *ab initio* is now being commenced. It is somewhat experimental, and will be extremely difficult to administer. Voluntary insurance, of course, is open to "selection against the funds," whereas compulsory insurance has a pooling effect. The third main principle is also one inherent in insurance. The basis is actuarial, and security is safeguarded by invested funds.

As national insurance is a combination of insurance principles with Government redistributions of national income, it is not surprising that its limitations are frequently ignored or misunderstood. A parliament may undertake by statute to provide certain benefits, but if it does not provide the financial security for them also, the undertaking is not one of insurance. The point is not clear-cut, but the principle should be clear. The benefits should have as their security something more tangible than the promise of an act of parliament, and the contributions received for future benefits should generally be held to meet the liabilities of those benefits. The present proposals are based on a combination of Commonwealth and British experience, and are to cover the great majority of the employed population. The contributions from employers and employees of both sexes are the sums required to cover the risks at the age of sixteen years. The large additional sums required at later ages are to be provided by the Commonwealth and will aggregate about £2,000,000 a year for the first five years, rising to over £11,000,000 a year.

The scheme is based on the accumulation of sufficient funds to provide enough interest to pay about one-third of the pension benefits when the scheme matures. When that period is reached the insured persons will be contributing only one-sixth of the annual cost of the scheme. These funds will be held in trust for the contributors, and will be their security. There will be a large pensions fund and a smaller health fund. Apart from a portion of the investments under the health scheme which may be under the control of the trustees



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

of the approved societies, all the funds will be under the control of a representative board of trustees to be specially set up under the bill, a clause in which provides that all moneys under the scheme must be kept for the sole benefit of the insured persons, and must not be held or applied as security for any purposes outside the scheme. The bill may be considered from several aspects, but honourable Senators will, I think, get a sufficiently comprehensive view of it, if I set out the classes of persons who are to be affected, the benefits to which they will be entitled, and the contributions which will be payable. Other aspects are the means by which the scheme is to be administered, and the financial arrangements for ensuring its solvency.

With a few exceptions, all persons over the age of fourteen years who are employed under a contract of service will be brought within the scope of the scheme.

Senator DUNCAN-HUGHES: Whether of British or foreign nationality?

Senator A. J. McLACHLAN: Yes.

Senator DUNCAN-HUGHES: Will they have to be naturalised?

Senator A. J. McLACHLAN: I do not think that the bill makes provision for naturalisation. That is a matter for consideration in committee.

Persons employed otherwise than by way of manual labour whose rate of remuneration exceeds £365 per annum and certain other limited classes are exempted from the scheme. The bill thus provides for the compulsory insurance of employed persons whose rate of remuneration does not exceed £7 a week, but there is no limit of remuneration as regards manual workers. The reason for this distinction is that some manual workers earn more than £7 a week at certain times of the year, but not as a rule more than at that rate throughout the whole of the year. As far as is practicable, all regularly employed persons will be brought within the scope of the scheme, but special provisions will be necessary to cover the circumstances of particular classes, such as shearers and waterside workers, and large classes of government employees will be wholly or partially excluded. The bill provides for total or partial exemption when all the benefits or part of the benefits, according to the conditions of the employment, are guaranteed by a government, and are on the whole equal to, or better than, the benefits to be guaranteed under national insurance. There will, of course, be equivalent exemption from contributions. The precise definition of the group concerned will be dealt with as one of the first responsibilities of the National Insurance Commission to be appointed. It may be explained, how-



## NATIONAL INSURANCE

ever, that the usual continuance of salary allowed in such employments during sickness will probably be considered as equivalent to both medical treatment and sickness and disablement benefits under national insurance.

The bill does not allow of the exclusion of private employments, some of which have superannuation schemes and other provisions for the welfare of employees. There are some differences of opinion on the merits of this feature. Some organisations would like exemption because they are proud of their schemes, and some employees fear that their employers may reduce their total contributions for employees' benefits when they become contributors to national insurance. Other organisations think it better to benefit from the contribution made by the Commonwealth to national insurance, and mean to adapt their own schemes to fit in with what is to be provided under this legislation. Where employers have contractual liabilities for provident funds they may need the aid of the State Parliaments to secure proper adjustments. On the whole, such adaptations offer the best solution. The administrators of national insurance must be satisfied that any excluded person has his benefits guaranteed to him without any possible doubt, and they cannot be responsible for the solvency of private benefit schemes.

While the present proposals are limited to the insurance of employees, and therefore do not cover self-employed persons at the outset, the insurance will not cease when persons lose their employment. Among the benefits is a "free insurance period" which can extend to cover nearly two years after employment has ceased. Contributors will be excused during sickness, and no sick person can lapse from the scheme, however long the sickness may be. The scope of the scheme is widened very greatly by provision for the continuance of insurance on a voluntary basis by persons who have been compulsorily insured for two years, and who either become self-employed or pass above the remuneration limit.

The great majority of the people will have been employed persons in the early years of their working lives, and will have become eligible to continue as voluntary contributors. The limitation of the title to voluntary insurance affects persons who have already passed out of employment rather than any special class of occupation. It is comparable to the exclusion of persons who are already past the pension age.

The most important limitations are, of course, imposed by the financial resources of the contributors and the Commonwealth Treasury. It may be contended that the employees, or the employer, or the Treasury, or all three, should be asked for more. There is



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

as much force in the contention that some, or all of them, are being asked to pay too much.

Coming now to the contributions, I would remind honourable Senators that, in an insurance scheme created on a precise actuarial basis, contributions and benefits must be strictly related to one another if the scheme is to remain solvent. If the benefits are to be increased, the contributions must be increased in proportion. In fixing the rates of the weekly contributions, the Government has been compelled to have regard to the amount which the lower-paid wage-earners could afford to pay, and in fixing the women's contributions the fact has been borne in mind that the average wages of women are only about 54 per cent. of the average wages of men. The ordinary total weekly contribution at the inception of the scheme will be 3s. a week in respect of an employed man, and 2s. a week in respect of an employed woman, the contribution, in each case, being shared equally between the employer and the employee. Lower rates of contributions have been fixed for certain other persons, who, by reason of guaranteed provision elsewhere, can secure partial exemption from the scheme and will, therefore, be covered for part only of the complete scheme of insurance.

Special provision is made in the bill for young persons who, though under the age of sixteen, at which full insurance of employed persons begins, are in employment and not less than fourteen years of age. The original bill provided for these young persons medical benefit only, in view of the importance for future health of providing treatment for the adolescent, and of the need, on the other hand, of keeping as low as possible the contributions to be paid by young persons between the ages of fourteen to sixteen years, whose wages are generally low. Most of the young persons will be dependent on their parents, and therefore their most pressing need is for medical treatment when they fall ill.

In the House of Representatives, however, the Government was strongly urged to make some small provision for these young persons by way of sick pay, and the Government accordingly introduced amendments which, without increasing contributions, provide juvenile contributors with sickness benefit at the rate of 5s. a week, when incapacitated from work, if they have satisfied the usual conditions for title to this benefit. These amendments also have done away with the waiting period, originally imposed on juvenile contributors before their title to medical benefit became effective, and have secured that insurance as a juvenile contributor shall count, without reduction, towards satisfying the qualifications for benefits of persons who continue in insurable employment after reaching the age of sixteen.



## NATIONAL INSURANCE

The following benefits are included in the scheme:—Sickness benefit, disablement benefit, additional benefits, medical benefit, old-age pension, widow's pension, orphan's pension, dependent child's allowance.

I do not propose to go into the details of each of these benefits at this stage. They are sufficiently explained in the memorandum circulated by the Government in connection with the bill. Broadly speaking, these benefits may be divided into two main classes, namely: benefits associated with health—health insurance benefits; and those of the nature of superannuation benefits—pension benefits. The first class will be administered by approved societies, and pension benefits by the Insurance Commission.

As regards the administration of the sickness and disablement benefits, the Government has decided to entrust this part of the work to societies which will be under the direct control of the insured persons themselves. This is a great experiment in public administration in this country, but I am convinced that the government of these societies by the members themselves, subject, of course, to audit and supervision by the Insurance Commission, will preserve that personal touch and humanitarian interest which are requisite for the satisfactory administration of a sickness scheme.

The bill provides that separate sections of registered friendly societies and of trade unions may be approved societies under the scheme, if they conform to the requirements laid down. By this means we shall enlist the services of the many prominent organisations in Australia which have already got a valuable accumulation of experience in the administration of sickness benefits. The bill also provides for the formation and approval of other societies throughout the Commonwealth which, in the opinion of the Insurance Commission, are qualified to undertake the important work of sickness insurance administration. Representations have already been received with regard to the formation of approved societies from quite a number of important organisations which are already doing valuable welfare work in the Commonwealth, and I have no doubt that, in a comparatively short period of time, sufficient applications for approval will be received to ensure that nearly every part of the Commonwealth will be provided with ample facilities for insurance under the new scheme. No society will be approved that is carried on for profit. Any surplus arising out of the operations of the society must be distributed among the members by way of additional benefits. The societies will be subject to audit by auditors appointed by the Insurance Commissioner, and to avoid extravagance in administration, there will be a limit placed upon the amount which can be spent upon administration. No society can continue as an approved



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

society unless it can attain to a membership of at least 2,000 within a reasonable period of time. This is a wise precaution from the point of view of securing efficient administration and a reasonable measure of security against the risks of heavy sickness following upon an epidemic.

One of the most valuable provisions in the bill is the arrangement under which one-half of the disposable surplus revealed as a result of the actuarial valuation of every approved society is to be put into a common pool, and then re-distributed among all the societies in proportion to their membership. This arrangement will be of special advantage to societies which have had a run of heavy sickness claims during a valuation period, and it will tend to equalise the rates of benefits among the various societies—a desirable end in a national scheme. By leaving with each society at least one-half of the surplus which it has earned, we shall preserve the incentive to careful administration which is of special importance in the supervision of sickness claims.

I have great hopes, in view of the healthy conditions under which our people live in Australia, that the valuation results of our approved societies will disclose successively increasing surpluses as each valuation comes round, and that the health scheme will, in time, be able to give additional benefits of a preventive and curative character such as dental services, ophthalmic treatment, payments to hospitals, and other benefits enumerated in the fourth schedule of the bill. The bill contains ample safeguards in the contingency and special risks funds against the risks of societies falling into deficiency as a result of heavy sickness claims, and, so far as it is humanly possible to foresee, no society which is properly administered need fear having to reduce its statutory benefits because of a run of bad luck. Insured persons will be free to join the society of their own choice, and no society will be allowed to reject an application for admission on the ground of age. Each society will receive a suitable reserve value graded in amount according to the age of each contributor over the age of sixteen years. When the scheme has been in operation for some little time, steps will be taken by the Commission to allocate, compulsorily, among societies, any insured persons who have not voluntarily joined societies or who have been unable to obtain admission to a society.

The medical service that the Government proposes to provide by way of medical benefit under the insurance scheme will be a first-class general practitioner service. It will be administered by the Insurance Commission and will be available to every person insured for the health benefits of the act, without a waiting period, and will include services wider in scope than those generally provided under the existing contract practice. Medicines and drugs of the best



## NATIONAL INSURANCE

quality, and certain medical and surgical appliances, will be supplied to the insured person as required, without extra charge, if ordered by the doctor providing treatment.

The Government believes that the introduction of medical benefit under the insurance act will make possible the development of medical services, for insured persons at least as a first step, throughout the country, and their eventual extension into areas where medical facilities are now far from adequate. This cannot, of course, be done forthwith, but we shall have a basis on which to provide for expansion, and we should at least be able at an early date to provide general practitioner treatment for all insured persons within reasonable reach of a doctor.

So far as these aims are concerned the Government has, it believes, the concurrence of the medical profession. Certain details of the machinery remain to be worked out in consultation with representatives of the doctors concerned. There is at present some disagreement between the Government and the medical profession as to the proper rate of remuneration to be paid for the insurance doctor's work, and some misunderstanding of the conditions of service under the act. The question of remuneration will shortly be referred to a royal commission, and the misunderstandings as to the conditions of work will, I am confident, be largely dispelled when further questions of detail have been discussed with representatives of the profession.

I have referred to the drugs and medicines to be supplied as part of medical benefit, together with certain prescribed appliances. These appliances will be mainly bandages, dressings and splints, as required in connection with such operations or treatment of injuries as may be covered by the insurance doctor's contract. The general arrangements for the supply of these drugs, medicines, and appliances have been agreed to by the representatives both of the registered pharmacists and of the friendly societies' dispensaries, by whom the supply will be undertaken. The arrangements make secure to the insured persons complete free choice of a chemist, and the system of remuneration will be, in substance, repayment for the wholesale cost of the materials supplied, supplemented by a fee for each prescription, to cover the chemist's overhead expenses and to provide payment for his professional services.

The pension scheme also will be administered by the Commission. This scheme will include—

Old-age pensions for insured women at 60.

Old-age pensions for insured men at 65.

Pensions for life (or until re-marriage) for widows of insured men.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

In each of these instances there will be additional allowances for dependent children. The scheme also provides pensions for orphans, that is, for the children of insured persons, both of whose parents are dead.

In addition, there is a special scheme of cheap voluntary insurance for old-age pensions at 60 for wives who had been in compulsory insurance for a certain time. I shall refer to this later.

In order to enable the widows and orphans to participate in the benefits of the scheme at the earliest practicable date, it has been provided that these pensions shall come into operation after the payment of 104 contributions in respect of the husband's or father's insurance. That means that after the payment of only £7/16/- in contributions by the man himself, the widow will become entitled to a pension, plus children's allowances, which, according to the estimate of the actuaries, will be worth on the average a capital sum of £700.

For the reasons already given, the scheme at the outset will be restricted to employed contributors, but many persons who relinquish employment, or whose salaries rise above the limit for compulsory insurance, namely, £365 a year, will desire to continue their insurances. The bill accordingly contains a valuable option under which all such persons other than married women, if they have been in compulsory insurance for at least two years, will have the right to continue in the scheme as voluntary contributors at the ordinary rate of contribution. As the benefits under the scheme will be worth on the average more than three times the amount of the total weekly contributions at the age of 40, and as their value will increase rapidly with the age of the contributor, it may be anticipated that large numbers of insured persons will wish to continue in insurance as voluntary contributors, and, if it is generally desired, arrangements will be made to enable contributions to be paid by monthly, quarterly, or half-yearly instalments.

The claims of the woman who has been in insurance for a reasonable length of time and who gives up her employment on marriage or some time thereafter have not been overlooked. Many of these women will desire to continue their insurance for an old-age pension, and a scheme has been devised under which they may remain in insurance for pensions only, as special voluntary contributors. For this pension they will pay a contribution of 1s. a week—and that contribution will be fixed and not subject to any later increase. When I remind honourable Senators that a woman's old-age pension at 60 will be worth over £400 in capital value, and that even at the age of 30, she would have to pay 3s. 6d. a week for this cover to an insurance society, the attractiveness of the scheme will at once become



## NATIONAL INSURANCE

apparent. Of course, many of the women will marry insured men, and we have made it clear in the bill that, for special voluntary contributors, the old-age pension under the bill will be in addition to, and not in lieu of, any widow's pension and children's allowances to which such women may become entitled by virtue of their husband's insurance.

A desire has been expressed in certain quarters that women should be entitled to insure for an old-age pension of 20s. a week at 60 years of age, instead of the 15s. a week provided in the bill. The Government was reluctant to increase still further the compulsory contributions for women under the bill, as it may be anticipated that a large proportion of the women on the basic wage—upon whom an extra contribution might press rather heavily—would qualify for the extra 5s. in any case, under the clause in the bill which provides for a supplementary allowance under the existing Invalid and Old-age Pensions Act. The situation has been met by including in the bill a provision, under which all insured women can exercise an option, within a fixed period, to pay an extra 6d. a week, so as to qualify for a full insurance pension of 20s. a week.

The fact that the benefits of the scheme are secured to the insured person by the joint co-operation of himself, his employer, and the Commonwealth, has enabled the Government to offer those benefits to insured persons on extraordinarily attractive terms. It is estimated that the average age at which insured persons will enter the scheme next year will be, for men nearly 34 years and for women nearly 28 years. Men will pay  $1/6$  a week— $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. for health insurance, and  $10\frac{1}{2}$ d. for pensions. For  $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. a week for health insurance they will get benefits which will be actuarially worth at age 34 nearly  $1/6$  a week. For  $10\frac{1}{2}$ d. a week for pension insurance they will get benefits which will be actuarially worth at age 34 about  $6/6$  a week; that is, over seven times the value of their own contributions.

Women will pay 1s. a week—7d. for health insurance and 5d. for pensions. For 7d. a week for health insurance they will get benefits which will be actuarially worth, at age 28, nearly  $1/6$  a week. For 5d. a week for pensions insurance they will get benefits which will be actuarially worth, at age 28, about 3s. a week, that again being seven times the value of their own contributions. Even if we take into account the fact that later on the men's contributions will be increased by 6d. a week and the women's by 3d. a week, it remains true that the scheme offers to the entrants of next year valuable health and pensions benefits on terms which, for generosity, have never been surpassed by any other national insurance scheme in the world.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

As the Treasurer indicated in his second-reading speech upon the bill, the Government is very anxious to extend, as far as possible, the benefits of this scheme to the quite considerable number of self-employed persons in Australia whose economic circumstances are comparable with those who will be compulsorily insured under this bill. It is obvious that it would be unwise, and, indeed, administratively impracticable, to bring these persons compulsarily into the scheme. It is equally obvious that we could not fit a voluntary scheme into a compulsory one. It would be wrong to upset the whole actuarial balance of the compulsory scheme by introducing into it a group of people who can choose whether it will pay them best to come into the scheme, or to stay out. A separate scheme and a separate insurance fund for the self-employed group will need to be established. For some time past our officials and the actuaries, amid many other pre-occupations, have been engaged in working out the details of this separate scheme. It is not an easy task. It is impossible to forecast how many persons would take advantage of the scheme, what their ages and family responsibilities would be, and consequently what financial burden would fall upon the Commonwealth. The Government, however, is determined to press on with the matter, and sufficient progress has been achieved to warrant the statement that a Voluntary Pensions Bill for the self-employed will be introduced at an early date, on terms which ought to prove attractive to those who desire to be insured.

The last matters to which I propose to refer are the methods by which the Government is going to finance the whole scheme. The basic principle of the scheme is that the weekly contribution of each insured person must be the equivalent in value of the benefits under the scheme of persons of the same sex who enter into insurance at the age of sixteen. The finance of the scheme will thus be free of the criticism that "the young pay for the old." Young and old alike will pay the minimum contribution—and the added cost of oncoming years will be met by the Commonwealth Government out of general revenue. At the outset of the scheme a large number of persons, getting on in years, will be brought into insurance for the first time. More than half a million of them will be over 40 years of age. Persons will be admitted to full insurance under the scheme at all ages between 16 and 65, paying contributions appropriate to entrants at age sixteen, and the scheme will therefore start with the assumption of liabilities greater than the contributions will cover. In other words, there will be an initial deficit both on the health insurance and on the pensions side. When the bill was originally presented to the Parliament, the capitalised value of the deficit was estimated at £281,500,000, i.e., £17,500,000 on the health scheme and



## NATIONAL INSURANCE

£264,000,000 on the pensions scheme, but since then certain concessions have been granted which will slightly increase the deficit on the pensions scheme. It is not possible to state the amount of the increase, as the chief concession is in the nature of an option, and the extent to which the option will be exercised cannot be foreseen.

Senator DUNCAN-HUGHES: Will that affect the rate of contributions?

Senator A. J. McLACHLAN: No. These initial deficits will be met by grants from the Commonwealth, but in different ways.

On the health side, in order that the deficit should not fall on the approved societies, through whose accounts will be paid the sums required to meet the cost of health insurance benefits, the Commonwealth contribution will take the form of guaranteeing the additional liabilities in the first place by crediting the societies with "reserve values," and secondly by annual grant by the Commonwealth Government of 10s. per annum for each insured person, to be paid into a sinking fund which will gradually replace that guarantee by cash about 30 years hence, after providing  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. interest annually on the amount of the reserve values for the time being unliquidated. When the reserve values are liquidated, the Commonwealth grant will cease, and the bill provides accordingly. The sum involved is about £900,000 per annum.

The problem as to the best and wisest way of financing the pensions scheme presented special difficulties. We were faced with the enormous initial deficit of £264,000,000 arising from the high average age of entrants. In the absence of a fund, this liability would have necessitated a grant from the Commonwealth of £20,000,000 a year. We had, therefore, to face the problem that, 40 years hence, the Commonwealth might be faced with a liability of £36,000,000 or £37,000,000 a year in respect of national insurance and the Invalid and Old-age Pensions Act—£20,000,000 a year for the former and £16,000,000 or £17,000,000 for the latter. The Government was not prepared to commit future generations to a liability of such magnitude, and the conclusion was reached that, if this national insurance scheme is to be brought into operation, the present generation—the generation which is to benefit by the creation of the initial deficit—must make some contribution in advance of the immediate needs, in order to build up, before the full liabilities of the pensions scheme develop, a fund, the interest on which, together with annual grants from the Commonwealth, will meet the increasing charges when they exceed the amount received in contributions. That is the scheme embodied in this bill. The Commonwealth will pay to the pension scheme under the bill £1,000,000 a year for the first five



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

years. Thereafter, the grant will rise at the rate of £500,000 a year until it reaches its maximum of £10,000,000 a year in 1961. It is estimated that from that year the annual grant of £10,000,000, with the interest upon the fund which is being gradually built up, will be sufficient to finance the future needs of the national insurance scheme in respect of pensions. It is important to note that, under this arrangement, apart from the fixed grant of £1,000,000 a year to pensions for the first five years, in no one year would the Commonwealth be called upon to undertake a heavier financial liability for pensions under this national insurance scheme and the Invalid and Old-age Pensions Act than what the cost of the Invalid and Old-age Pensions Act alone would be, if this national insurance scheme were not adopted.

Thus far I have dealt with the financing of the scheme. Honourable Senators may be interested to know the extent to which it is anticipated that these funds will be drawn upon to meet benefits under the scheme. The actuaries estimate that the following amounts will be paid out in cash under the insurance scheme in successive yearly periods, apart altogether from the valuable medical services:—During the fifth year of the scheme, £2,800,000; tenth year of the scheme, £9,400,000; twentieth year of the scheme, £18,600,000; thirtieth year of the scheme, £25,000,000; fortieth year of the scheme £28,500,000.

It is estimated that, in addition to the payments for medical services, the cash disbursements for sickness under the health insurance scheme will, in the course of time, exceed £3,000,000 a year. The disbursement under the contributory pensions scheme will reach £30,000,000 a year, and about 1,000,000 persons would participate in one or other of the benefits of that scheme in each year. The effect of the national insurance pension scheme, in conjunction with the existing Invalid and Old-age Pensions Act, will be that, eventually, about £46,000,000 a year will be distributed in pensions among more than treble the present number of participants.

Having regard to the estimated number of participants, the variety and usefulness of the benefits to be provided and the large initial capital liability, I think it may be truly said that the national health and pensions insurance scheme is a measure of the greatest social importance. Designed as it is to alleviate some of the anxieties which disturb the peace of mind of many of our fellow-Australians—both men and women—the scheme will, I am sure, meet with the approval of all persons who have the welfare of their country at heart. I commend the bill to honourable Senators and ask them to give it their generous support.



## NATIONAL INSURANCE

### NATIONAL HEALTH AND PENSIONS INSURANCE BILL 1938.

Senator A. J. McLACHLAN: After the eloquent speech of the President (Senator Lynch) I feel almost dumb. His address appealed to all, but I imagine that it would have made a special appeal to a jury of matrons. In the few minutes at my disposal, I shall endeavour to concentrate on the more important points raised during the debate. I shall pass by various suggestions, with which I hope to deal more fully in committee; but there are a few matters of outstanding importance to which I desire to refer. I do not propose to try to search the hearts of honourable members opposite with regard to this measure, because I am incapable of understanding whether their opposition to the measure is due to jealousy by reason of the fact that this forward movement in social reform comes from a government of which I am a member, or whether it is simply political manœuvring. Whatever the reason, one can scarcely harmonise the speeches of honourable Senators opposite with their protestations of goodwill towards the people whom this measure will affect. My diagnosis is that a large percentage of those who, both in this chamber and in the other branch of the legislature, oppose this measure, do so merely for political reasons. They desire to exhibit a certain amount of solidarity, but evidence is not lacking that some of them oppose this measure with their tongues in their cheeks. Others have frankly refrained from voting on certain important issues. I do not propose to discuss the bill in a partisan way, because its introduction has been actuated by the highest motives. The Government has been charged with acting hastily and exhibiting a lack of consideration. The Leader of the Opposition (Senator Collings) suggested that the Government has not even considered the constitutionality of the measure. I do not intend to traverse all of what has been said about the history of national insurance in this country. My colleague from South Australia, Senator Duncan-Hughes, pointed out that the report of the royal commission which thoroughly investigated national insurance was the basis of a bill which had made substantial progress in this Parliament when the dissolution occurred in 1928. For some years before the introduction of this bill, the honourable member for Parramatta (Sir Frederick Stewart) was active in influencing the Government to bring down a national insurance measure. Before this bill was introduced every preparation was made. Every source of information was tapped by the Government, both here and abroad. The national insurance schemes in England and Europe were closely



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

scrutinised before the details of our bill were finally settled. The Government has had the assistance of experts from Great Britain.

In passing, I pay tribute to Sir Walter Kinnear. That gentleman, who rendered wonderful service in the preparation of this bill, has been in Australia twice to investigate national insurance; not only the industrial aspect of it, but also the aspect which concerns those sparsely populated areas to which I shall make later reference. Sir Walter Kinnear has investigated national insurance schemes in other British countries, in British Columbia for instance. He has now had the high compliment paid to him of being called by the Government of the United States of America to put upon a sound footing the national insurance scheme which was introduced into that country.

The Leader of the Opposition (Senator Collings) expressed doubt as to the constitutionality of this bill and expressed the opinion that the Government had not given that aspect sufficient thought. It would be a poor lot of governments which would not inquire into the constitutional aspects before proceeding to set up a royal commission, to draft a bill, to send men overseas to obtain information, and to bring experts to this country. I assure the honourable gentleman that the constitutional aspect has had the consideration not only of the present Attorney-General, but also of his predecessors. Moreover, in order that I, humble as I am in my profession, should not be misguided by my own preconceived convictions, I took care to ensure that this bill was framed in such a way as to make it impregnable, as I see it, to attack on the ground of unconstitutionality. I do not desire to use more of my time in dealing with this aspect of the matter, because I believe that what was said by the Leader of the Opposition was intended as a smoke screen. The Leader of the Opposition, for political or other reasons, did not want to discuss the merits of the bill. Before leaving the subject, however, I remind the honourable gentleman that there are other powers in the Constitution besides that contained in placitum xiv. There is the appropriation power, under which we can appropriate from the Exchequer moneys necessary to implement this measure. We are bringing down two other measures to enable us to levy contributions from the employer and the employee respectively.

I shall be pleased, when the minor constitutional matter mentioned by Senator Leckie arises in committee, to explain to him the grounds on which the Attorney-General, the law officers of the Commonwealth and I are of the opinion that clause 188 is absolutely constitutional.

One of the charges made by the Leader of the Opposition was that this measure is not complete, that it should contain provision for



## NATIONAL INSURANCE

unemployment insurance. Honourable Senators who have read the two reports furnished by Sir Walter Kinnear and Mr. Ince know that the two schemes are distinct, that they are based on different statistical facts and actuarial calculations, and that in any event there would have had to be two bills to give effect to unemployment insurance as well as to health and pensions insurance. Senator Pearce pointed out that unemployment insurance is so inextricably mixed up with the affairs of the States that it is essential, before anything in the nature of legislation for unemployment insurance can be introduced into the Commonwealth Parliament, for an arrangement to be reached between the Commonwealth and the States. Various conferences have been held on this matter, and it is proposed to hold another one shortly in an endeavour to arrive at some reasonable arrangement.

The Leader of the Opposition suggested that there was no security under this measure for the insured person. No security! Has the honourable gentleman read the terms of the measure? He complained about the number of bodies that are to be set up. But the board of trustees, for instance, is the best security that the insured person could have. Does the honorable gentleman not realise that in the world of insurance there are two classes of insurance funds? One is set aside in the books of the company for the benefit of the policy-holder, and the books are subject to government audit and actuarial valuation. Those funds are as inviolate as the trust moneys are to be under this measure. Unless this country crashes, the fund to be established is better secured under the provisions now made than is any other trust fund of which I know.

Senator COLLINGS: I remind the Leader of the Senate that when the crash came in 1930 a raid was made by the Government upon the Commonwealth public servants' superannuation fund.

Senator A. J. McLACHLAN: That fund is on an entirely different basis. What the honorable Senator suggests cannot be. Men of the standing of the Solicitor-General are to be trustees under this bill. They will be answerable, not to the Government, but to the nation. They will have a duty to the insured persons, just as the director of an assurance company has a duty to its members. The funds of mutual companies belong to and are held in trust for the policy-holders. The same sort of trust is embodied in this legislation. Every safeguard is provided to ensure that the funds in the hands of the various approved societies shall be secured, and there will not be that degree of wreckage that has taken place in the funds of some outside organisations. Never has greater care been taken to make funds inviolate than has been taken under this bill. The only thing that might wreck that security is the adoption of the



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

policy which the Leader of the Opposition suggested could settle all of our ills, namely, the extraction of money from the air. I shall not waste time over that, because it is so much eye-wash for the unthinking public.

Senator COLLINGS: Will the honorable Senator tell me where is the security against the possibility of a reduction of benefits in times of alleged financial stress?

Senator A. J. McLACHLAN: Of course, if the honorable Senator's party obtained power and played ducks and drakes with the finances of this country by the adoption of wild methods, we would probably have a crisis which would bring us to our knees as we were nearly brought to our knees in 1931. I fancy that the honorable Senator is trying to make out that there is no security for the insured people in the sense that the pensions were reduced in 1931-32. I do not blame the government of the day for that reduction.

Senator COLLINGS: I am not talking about that. I am talking about the public servants' superannuation funds, which, when the Government needed money, were raided. I do not blame the Government for doing that, but the same thing might happen in this case.

Senator A. J. McLACHLAN: Once the national insurance fund is in the control of the trustees, short of a dishonest act of Parliament there will be no power to raid it. What occurred in respect of the superannuation fund was due to the fact that the whole economy of the country was upset. The pensions were reduced and the funds were raided. Nothing of that nature occurred to the funds of the Australian Mutual Provident Society. Those funds were held by trustees who regarded their trust as sacred, and who had made ample provision by way of reserves to meet all contingencies. I take it that the gentlemen who will handle this fund will not handle it in an improvident way. I should have preferred a lower rate of interest than the 3½ per cent., which is the governing rate set out in this scheme. I should have preferred something more conservative, but I deny the possibility of raiding this fund. Every precaution has been taken to audit and govern approved societies, and the funds will be vested in trustees and controlled by them independent of any treasurer or political force.

Senator COLLINGS: Reduction by the Government of the amount of its contribution from consolidated revenue, which would lead to a reduction of the benefits, would be a raid on the funds.

Senator A. J. McLACHLAN: No! Senator Collings complained that there was no security for the insured persons. I counter that



## NATIONAL INSURANCE

with the declaration that no more security could be given than has been given. From a business point of view, one could not have better security than has been provided. Of course, if the country is going to repudiate—we were pretty close to it once—that will be a different matter.

There are one or two other aspects that have been touched upon by other honorable Senators, as well as the Leader of the Opposition. It has been suggested that there is no provision for organised medical services. Because medical service matters are to be arranged by the Commission, the details do not appear in the bill. Details, control, management, remuneration, duties and other matters will all be settled between the Commission and the medical profession. Questions were asked during the debate as to what would happen to the actuarial basis of the Bill if the capitation fee of 11/- to doctors were increased or if, as is more likely, the mileage rate were increased. I do not wish to say one word as to whether those fees, which were the subject of compromise between the Treasurer and a certain section of the medical profession, are too high or too low. I do not wish to prejudice any further negotiations in respect of that matter. But the Government is so firm in the belief that 11/- will be a fair payment that the Treasurer is prepared to risk that. In regard to mileage in country districts, the increase can only be such as the fund will be able to stand. I do not share the view expressed by the Leader of the Opposition that the service which the medical profession is to give is in the nature of first aid for trifling ills.

Senator COLLINGS: That is all that it is.

Senator A. J. McLACHLAN: In committee the honorable Senator will see that it is much more than that. Not only will the service be a general practitioner's full service, but also the drugs to be supplied will be of first-class quality. When Senator Duncan-Hughes referred to this matter I thought that he had made a point that had been overlooked. I might have known that it would not have escaped the notice of the gentlemen who have been handling the matter on behalf of the Treasurer. I thought that Senator Duncan-Hughes had scored a point, because provision had been made for the supply of drugs retail at wholesale prices, and those prices might be a trifle too high. I have been informed, however, that the matter has been thoroughly covered. Lists have been furnished of the wholesale rates at which drugs are to be supplied by chemists. I assure the Leader of the Opposition that the quality of those drugs will be beyond question; they are to be of the best quality prescribed by the British Pharmacopœia, and are to be subject to periodical examination. If any attempt were



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

made to increase prices in the future, the Commission would have means to deal with it, and, if necessary, to take such action as would ensure supplies at a reasonable price.

Senator DUNCAN-HUGHES: There is no clause in which there is any provision for control to be exercised over the wholesale chemists in regard to price.

Senator A. J. McLACHLAN: There will be no control over the wholesale chemists in that sense.

Senator DUNCAN-HUGHES: There should be.

Senator A. J. McLACHLAN: I point out that lists of wholesale prices have already been supplied by the wholesalers. It is on those lists that the Pharmacy Board and the Commission have come to an arrangement.

Senator COLLINGS: I complain not about the price of the drugs, but about the meagre list which is to be supplied to insured persons.

Senator DUNCAN-HUGHES: This is an important point. Where is there mention in the bill of the cost of production by the chemists? How does that compare with the wholesale price?

Senator COLLINGS: There is no greater "ramp" in this country than that in connection with the price of drugs and medicines.

Senator A. J. McLACHLAN: That is an argument in favour of the contention that the tariff should be reduced in order to enable drugs and medicines to flow in from other countries. I do not think that anything so drastic will be necessary. I am assured—

Senator DUNCAN-HUGHES: We want to be assured by the bill.

Senator A. J. McLACHLAN: We can deal with that in committee, when the relevant part of the bill is reached. I was impressed by the importance of the matter when it was raised and immediately made enquiries. I was informed that the whole thing had been examined. In committee I shall give to the Senate the benefit of that examination so far as it is not confidential.

The points raised in regard to outlying districts have not been overlooked. If honorable Senators will study clauses 102 and 116 they will see what power has been reserved to the Commission to enable it to handle the situation. It is realised that, over an area of 3,000,000 square miles, with a sparsely populated interior, difficulties are bound to arise. Special provision has been made to enable the Commission to deal with the situation, even to the extent of providing for the moving of medical services from spot to spot. If the Commission should find itself incapable of handling



## NATIONAL INSURANCE

the situation, it will have the power to exempt any district until the scheme has been sufficiently developed to enable that area to be covered.

I shall deal with the point raised by Senator Abbott in connection with Christian Scientists when he moves the amendment he has forecast. I believe that I shall be able to satisfy him that it can be met in the administration of the scheme, although not perhaps to the limit desired. Provision has been made for certain exemptions, and any extension of them would cause difficulties with the medical profession. If there were 30,000 or 40,000 Christian Scientists in Australia, their withdrawal from the scheme would mean the loss by the medical profession of £22,000. I shall prove to the honorable Senator that if the Christian Scientists form approved societies they will suffer only to the slightest extent. He has spoken of them suffering for conscience. They will suffer no more than the Quakers suffer when they pay Commonwealth income tax, in the knowledge that a portion of the revenue so derived will be used for purposes of defence.

I regard as of extreme importance the position of the small man, to whom Senator Johnston referred as the £208 a year man, who has to employ labour for a time. On the face of it, a glaring injustice will be done to him under this scheme. The Government recognises that, and is prepared to give a certain undertaking. It is not possible to graft on to this contributory scheme another scheme of insurance which would place the small farmer or business man in a much better position. The Government is now, and has been for some months, considering the position. An examination is being made of the facts by skilled officers, and the Government hopes to be able shortly to submit to Parliament a scheme which will be financially sound, and will mitigate the injustice of this scheme in respect of the small man. This is based on certain statistical facts, which must be maintained until it has been worked out actuarially. Whatever is done must be done separately. However, an amendment is to be moved, and I shall then have an opportunity to give the honorable Senator a little more detail concerning the matter. Senator Duncan-Hughes and Senator Cunningham asked how the figure of £365, as the maximum income permissible under this scheme, had been reached. I am informed that that is the figure stipulated in the majority of the agreements between the friendly societies and the British Medical Association.

Senator DUNCAN-HUGHES: My information is that it represents the maximum figure, and that the average figure is nothing like so high.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

Senator A. J. McLACHLAN: A note supplied to me is to the effect that most of the agreements between the friendly societies and the British Medical Association stipulate that the contract is not to apply to persons earning more than £364 a year. That is the basis upon which the arrangement was made between the Treasurer (Mr. Casey) and the doctors.



## A CHANGE OF FRONT

DURING the passage of the National Insurance measure through the House of Representatives, the Prime Minister appeared to have some doubts as to the wisdom of placing such a burden upon the country. Several Ministers were away, two of them in London, and he frequently sent for me to his room, and expressed his feeling that the measure should be withdrawn. At first I thought he merely meant to defer it, but at later interviews he gave me to understand that he thought it was better that we should not proceed with the Bill. I was very disappointed, and told him plainly that it would wreck the Government, and that, coming from the rather more radical wing of the party as he did, it was likely to have a very serious effect on his undoubted hold of the people.

Evidently rumours had reached the Minister in charge of the measure in the Lower House that something was afoot, and he fumed and swore that he would resign if the measure were withdrawn. Wiser counsels ultimately prevailed, and the Prime Minister apparently was reconciled after some weeks of grave doubts, and the measure went through.

All Ministers having returned, the Bill having been passed through the Senate, we appeared to be in calm waters. I had told the Prime Minister that, in the event of the withdrawal of the Bill, several of the Ministers would have to consider their position as members of the Government, and that, personally, under no circumstances could I continue, having regard to my strong views on the importance of the matter. I had sped the parting Senators who were beaten at the previous election, and when the House resumed I continued to discharge my duties as Leader of the Senate.



My attitude on national insurance had been made quite clear.

In October of 1938, an apparently innocuous question was about to be asked concerning the chairmanship of the Hume Pipe Company and the fact that the company was contracting with the Postmaster-General's Department. I had no anxiety about the position. As a matter of precaution, I obtained from the departmental head some figures and particulars regarding the matter. Some trade journal had, early in January of the year, made some suggestion that the Hume Pipe Company was getting more than its share of certain conduit contracts, and hinting that this may have been due to the fact that I was the political head of the department. They went on: "We hasten to add that we do not suggest the Postmaster-General had any part in the recent decisions or that he knew anything about them. Such decisions are not made by the Minister, but by permanent officials." The directors of some other pottery company called on me and produced the journal, and said they desired to be entirely dissociated from the statements made in it and from any inferences that might be drawn from the article in question. They also said they were perfectly satisfied that the officers of the department were acting solely in the interests of the department in accepting or rejecting tenders. I thanked these gentlemen and assured them that I knew nothing about the tenders, nor had I taken any part in deciding what material was to be used or what tenders accepted. They intimated that they were quite satisfied on this head, and merely wished to say they were in entire disagreement with any inferences that might be suggested by the article referred to.

Having regard to the question on the notice paper, I thought it wise to get from the department the amount of contracts received by the Hume Pipe Company from the time I had first accepted the portfolio of Postmaster-General, and found that during the first year the contracts had amounted to £141, in the second year to £1,625, in the



## A CHANGE OF FRONT

third year to £2,413, in the year 1936-37 to £4,750, and in the year 1937-38 to £8,805, or a grand total of £17,734, out of total contracts let to other people in respect of the same work, but including the Hume Pipe Company, of £74,632.

I had taken the precaution before being sworn in of asking the Director-General whether my position as chairman of directors of the Hume Pipe Company would in any way conflict with my duties as Postmaster-General, and received his assurance that under no circumstances were contracts for local supplies ever referred to the Minister, and that I would have nothing whatever to do with them.

Such was the position, and I felt no sense of uneasiness about it. I had held the position of chairman of the company ever since my entry into Parliament, and the fact was known not only to my colleagues in the Government, but to, I think, every member on both sides of the House. I had no idea by whom the question was inspired, and felt no discomfort either then or at any other time regarding the position. As a matter of fact, when the coalition was formed in 1937 I could have accepted another portfolio which the Prime Minister was good enough to offer me. I had pointed out to him that the fewer changes he made in personnel and their ministerial offices, the easier it would be to settle the new team in, but I told him that it entirely rested with him, and that I would gladly comply with his wishes if he still thought I should take the other portfolio. He finally decided, however, that I should remain as Postmaster-General.

I found that Cabinet, while I was engaged in conducting business in the Senate, was considering my position and discussing the matter in my absence. I scarcely considered this either loyal or fair to one who for years had enjoyed the confidence, as I thought, of my Prime Minister. I was very dissatisfied with the absence of a defence policy. I was uneasy about the fate of the National Insurance Bill, which, while it had passed, could not be made law until it was proclaimed; in short, I had come to the conclusion



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

that the Prime Minister had lost his hold over the joint parties, due possibly to his failing health or the threatened approach of war. To put it in colloquial language, he seemed on many occasions to be rattled. He appeared to be worried, and I felt the time had arrived when I could no longer sit with any comfort in a company that did not give me its fullest trust and confidence. I had telephoned the departmental head, with whom my relationship had always been of the most pleasant, in fact cordial, character, that I contemplated resigning. He implored me not to do so, but I pointed out to him that there were many facets of the matter other than the miserable and squalid suggestions that I used, or might use, my ministerial position for the benefit of a company of which I was a director. I rang the managing director of the Hume Pipe Company and told him that I intended resigning. He begged me not to do so, making flattering references to my services to the country, and said that he would get the company to refrain entirely from contracting with the Federal Government if this had really anything to do with the matter. This was a generous tribute, but I felt the time had come for a severance.

The Prime Minister sent for me and seemed very disturbed. I finally had to ask him if he wanted my resignation. He said something about all my fine service to the country. I told him I intended to resign and would send him a letter to that effect. This I did the same evening, and on the adjournment of the Senate announced the fact and read my letter. The letter was as follows:—

“My dear Prime Minister,

“On the notice paper of the House of Representatives to-day I find a question by Mr. George Lawson, making inquiries as to the companies of which I am a director, and, furthermore, asking if the department of which I am at present in control enters into contracts with some of those companies.

“I have made no secret of the fact that I am a director and chairman of directors of the Hume Pipe Company of Australia Limited. The supply of materials for post office requirements is arranged



## A CHANGE OF FRONT

by inviting public tenders, which, in addition to being advertised in the Commonwealth Gazette, are brought under the notice of the firms from whom it has been customary to receive tenders. On receipt of tenders, the details are scheduled and analysed from the point of view of determining those which will provide the most economical supply of the material needed to meet the department's requirements.

"They are then examined by a tender board, consisting of three of the most highly placed officers of the department, who submit a recommendation, with the necessary details supporting their views, to the Director-General.

"The Director-General reviews the basis of the recommendations and the extent of the orders to be placed, and issues the necessary instructions to the Chief Inspector of Stores, who then executes the contract with the successful tenderer.

"It is not the practice to bring these matters under the notice of the Postmaster-General, excepting in unusual circumstances, such as, for instance, the placing of substantial orders with foreign firms. I have never been consulted in regard to the placing of contracts for pipes or ducts with firms with whom I may be associated or with any others, nor have I any departmental or personal knowledge of such contracts.

"Having regard to the suggestion underlying the question that I may in some obscure way have influenced the department, I feel that one course only is open to me, and that is to tender my resignation as Postmaster-General.

"This I do with some reluctance at such a time, but the protection of my honour and the honour of the Government against any insinuation that underlies the question on the notice paper leaves no other course open to me, and appears to be the one I should adopt under the circumstances.

"I shall carry on the business of the Senate and of the department until I hear from you."

I quote the conclusion of the speech I made to the Senate on the eve of my resignation:—

"My only regret is that the public life of this democracy has sunk so low that it should be for one moment suspected that a man would abuse the trust reposed in him by the Crown. I say that it is a degradation of democracy that such a charge should be made. My personal honour is dearer to me than all the pelf in the world."



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

The old politician is not easily deceived. There was nothing on the face of it that pointed to any other conclusion than that I felt embarrassed by the criticism involved in the question before the House. My resignation was acclaimed by the press as a very appropriate course under the circumstances to take. And there it rested, but only for a very short time.

I obtained information that the real reason was to remove from Cabinet one who it was felt would never yield on the question of national insurance. And so, as a little time passed and the measure had not been proclaimed, it was finally decided that it should not be brought into force. This was not only wrong, but it was the greatest political blunder that could have been made on what I regarded as my side of politics. Ministers who, like myself, had burned their boats on the question resigned and were replaced by others. The Minister who had piloted the Bill with such fervour in the House of Representatives, who had threatened resignation at the time the Prime Minister contemplated dropping it, still kept his place in the Government and apparently felt no embarrassment. He was created a Privy Councillor. Word had reached me that the question that was about to be asked in the House of Representatives had been inspired by one of our own side. The Labour man who asked the question was so horrified at what he thought was the result that he almost shed tears. He was a mere pawn in the game. My temperament had been shrewdly judged. I could have asked for a royal commission, or some commission of inquiry, but so tired was I of the vacillation of the Government at a time when a stern note was needed that no other course was really open to me than the one I took. A royal commission under the circumstances would have been a farce. There was nothing to answer, and it would have dragged its weary way along for some weeks, while I felt that I could no longer endure the atmosphere that existed in Cabinet.

Various aspects of the matter came under my notice. Some



## A CHANGE OF FRONT

were almost amusing. There had, of course, to be a reshuffle of portfolios when other Ministers besides myself fell out. Of all my colleagues in the Government, one, and one alone, who I believe was free of any knowledge of the intrigue that had taken place, wrote to sympathise with me.

I had still 5½ years to serve as a Senator. I had seen the rise of the Liberal Party and I had watched its gradual decay, a decay brought about by not adhering to its principles and forwarding its policy. It may interest some of my friends that, notwithstanding many important things done in the government of the country, no recognition was ever bestowed upon me.

Shortly after my resignation, certain information reached me, and as its outcome I addressed the following letter on the 9th March to the Prime Minister:—

“Dear Sir,

“As it is my intention to prove the matter of the refusal of your recommendation for my appointment as a Privy Councillor by some enquiries from the authorities in England, I would be glad of a reply from you as to whether there is anything of a personal character or any outside influence from Australia working against such recommendation of my services to the Crown.

“You wrote me from Colombo on 31st March, 1937, and you said that, in respect of your approaches you only expected (to) get the same reply as in the case of —, whom I recommended when he was in the Government. In fact, they referred me to the decision in that case. You continued, ‘If a member were leading either House, he would have a claim, and perhaps that position will yet arise.’

“That position arose and continued until my resignation. You went on to inform me that you had ‘done your best.’ To this letter, I sent you a reply in cypher, which, extended, reads as follows:

‘Reasons stated your letter 30th March indicate variation earlier practice in Australian cases Dominion services treated different basis British.’

“Your discussion with me from Tasmania by telephone is probably still fresh in your memory.

“Judge my surprise when I found that your recommendation was refused, and when later I found two British Under-Secretaries had received the recognition which I desired.



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

"Now comes the creation of the Treasurer. It appears to me that the rule to which you referred has been departed from, and that the personal association with the powers that be in Britain is all that matters, unless, of course, some person with personal ill-will to me has used influence at home to my detriment.

"You emphatically denied to me that such was the case, and made close enquiry as to the identity of anyone I might suspect.

"As I am bewildered by the maze of contradictions that have arisen, I am asking you to be good enough to assure me that you have no knowledge of any influences at work to my injury overseas. With such assurance, I can carry the matter to the fountain head on the broadest basis.

"If there is any such influence, I propose to take steps in Britain—even by going there to endeavour to remove it."

He replied on the 13th March in the following terms:—

"My dear Senator,

"I have your letter of the 9th March in regard to the proposal that you be appointed to His Majesty's Privy Council.

"The facts you mention in the earlier portion of your letter are quite correct. I was at great pains to recommend you for appointment to the Privy Council, and persevered with the matter until it had practically reached a stage when an announcement of His Majesty's pleasure might have been expected.

"You will, of course, realise that, though my position as Prime Minister enables me to make recommendations for honours, I am neither the sole nor the final authority in such matters, and it would be regarded as an indiscretion on my part to discuss in detail with any person the matter of the withholding of an honour.

"You indicate that you are inclined to endeavour to investigate this matter further, but I trust you are appreciative of the many difficulties associated with the approach to a subject, decision on which is regarded as the prerogative of His Majesty the King. However, your own judgment and discretion will, doubtless, guide you in this, and I would not attempt to dissuade you from any course of action which you may deem to be in your own interests."

I replied to this letter on the 16th March:—

"Dear Sir,

"I thank you for your letter of the 13th instant.

"I am grateful for what you have done and for the concluding



## A CHANGE OF FRONT

paragraph of advice. The difficulties you refer to, I think you should realise, are not unknown to me.

"The question I asked in my letter appears to have escaped your notice, unless a covert indication of a reply is conveyed in the second paragraph. I would remind you that I asked for no detail. I asked to be informed if you were aware of anything which might have cut across your recommendation.

"I am concerned about the position *qua* the Dominions, and it would appear you scarcely appreciate that point. It is a question that must be raised, and now—as I understand it—I have your assurance that the rule still stands, I will on some appropriate occasion ventilate the anomaly.

"As to my own position, I can only again repeat the question asked in my earlier letter. I never sought anything until you opened up the question with me on the eve of —'s preferment. Now it seems to me as if it were a question of my personal character—a view rather confirmed by your letter."

Having received a definite assurance from the Prime Minister that, in his opinion, no question with regard to my personal character had arisen, I wrote him later in March as follows:—

"I own your letter of the 22nd March. Your assurance that, in your opinion, there was no question with regard to my personal character is what I asked for in my original letter. I shall allow Australia to judge, when I have all the particulars I require, whether there is not discriminatory treatment.

"The remaining contents of your note are apparently venomously designed by the scribe. Surely you do not think that after the scurvy treatment I received on my resignation, I would expect or stoop to request consideration at your hands.

"My concern is not in respect of the present, but at the treatment I received as an Australian, when occupying the positions to which you refer."

The correspondence concluded early in April. I had written my letters without any reservations, and this is my final letter to the Prime Minister:—

"Dear Sir,

"It was with some regret that I felt constrained to express myself as I did in my last letter to you. If you have the time to peruse



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

our recent correspondence, you will, I think, see how the matter to which I referred struck me. It appeared as rubbing the salt into a wound, the wound being a deep sense of injustice.

"I was well aware I could expect nothing now, and did not seek anything.

"As to your observations in the House, it was left to a Labour member (Blackburn) partially to explain the position with which you were very much more familiar.

"Pleasant personal relations appeal to me, but I shall never be able to understand how preferment is apparently so easily obtained for one Minister and so difficult for another."



## WAR

War had come and the Japanese entry into the conflict produced a state of alarm in Australia. Politicians who had for years opposed in every shape and form the adequate defence of this country were, with scared eyes and most marked nervousness, enquiring how long it would be before the Americans reached our shores. I wonder if they ever thought of their own failure to do their duty by their country. I wonder if they ever looked back over the speeches they had made against conscription, against military training, really against discipline.

Australia has little to thank politicians for as regards its safety. They gurgled and they warbled about the tremendous effort that was made, an effort that was made by our sons, whose valour no one has ever doubted, an effort that was made by men patriotically giving their all and risking their existence for the sake of civilisation and for the defence of their homeland. I have seen them listening at the radio to the wonderful words of encouragement that the inspired Prime Minister, Churchill, voiced over the air from time to time. They appeared for the moment to be uplifted, and I wonder if they ever thought of their failure to do their duty by Australia.

I had concluded that my last Prime Minister was a pacifist, but his was a mistake of the heart and not of the head, and I verily believe that if he had lived he would, as his successors have done, have waged the war for freedom. I spoke as follows:—

## WAR IN EUROPE

Senator A. J. McLACHLAN: I agree with the view that has been expressed by honourable Senators on both sides of the Chamber that



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

this is indeed a solemn moment, because the action that has been taken for the reasons given in the White Paper placed before us involves the future of European civilisation. One could not help being struck by the inspiring and eloquent address delivered yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition (Senator Collings) on the higher ideals which should actuate the work of mankind generally. While the honorable gentleman was speaking I could not help taking my mind back to 1918, when similar ideals were propounded by that great idealist, the late Mr. Woodrow Wilson, then President of the United States of America, to which partial effect was given, but, unfortunately, they were bungled by the incorporation of the covenant of the League of Nations in the Treaty of Versailles. We, with all our human frailties, endeavoured to provide some tribunal which would determine the reign of force. That idealist aimed to set up a world organisation that would prevent cataclysms such as that which has just commenced, but the frailties of human nature have defeated the magnificent objective we had in view. I stood in Paris at the great Quai d'Orsay when the Kellogg Pact was signed further to buttress that principle. I heard the cheers of the French people when Dr. Stresemann came forward to sign the pact on behalf of the German Republic. In the hearts of the people—the most martial nation in Europe—there was no desire for war. There was a fervent desire for the rule of law, and the only word one heard was “security” and it was echoed over and over again. When the head of the German Government came forward to sign the pact the assembled thousands stood and cheered him repeatedly as he walked down the chamber to execute the document which was for ever to outlaw war. One is justified in re-echoing the conviction expressed in this chamber that in the hearts of mankind there is no desire for war. That being so, how does it happen that wars occur and recur? How can we devise any means, with human nature as it is, to prevent the recurrence of events which are so costly to humanity, causing frightful carnage and deluging the world with blood? In addition to the loss of human life, war involves the destruction of millions of pounds worth of material wealth, as Senator Collings pointed out yesterday. Consider the agony of bereaved widows and mothers, fatherless children, and the brothers and sisters of those who fall in the fight. Our people should be saved from the haunting fear of war, and the ceaseless grief that follows the loss of loved ones. Year after year we see the mothers of the young men who died in the 1914-18 war visiting war memorials, on which they place floral tributes. However bellicose we may be in our private lives, however prepared we are to fight the every-day battles, engage in arguments and resist physical chastisement, one's mind rebels at



wholesale carnage as a means of settling disputes between nations. During the last 100 years a tremendous body of international law, public and private, has been evolved for the settlement of international disputes by legal means. In other words, an attempt has been made to establish the rule of law, as opposed to the rule of force. The League of Nations was created and it was buttressed by the Kellogg Pact, which I had the honour to sign on behalf of the Commonwealth. That document was subscribed to by scores of nations, but, like many other pacts, has been violated by some of its signatories. But imperfect human nature has been unable to contrive effective machinery for the preservation of peace, and to-day, after 2,000 years of civilisation, we see a reversion to the ruthlessness of the jungle.

One aspect has been overlooked in this very excellent debate. Those of us who had gone through studies at the university and had examined the principles of international law, both public and private, received a rude shock in 1914. As I have said, a vast body of law has been built up, in the development of which the British Commonwealth of Nations and Great Britain itself have had a great share. Yet in 1914 Germany regarded an international treaty providing against the violation of Belgium as a "mere scrap of paper." When we read the White Paper now before us and recall the history of violated pacts and treaties and broken promises and pledges during the last few years, we cannot but think that deep down in the psychology of certain people there is an element of dishonesty. Can anyone justify the treatment of a solemn agreement between nations on any basis other than that on which an agreement between individuals would be treated? I know thousands of Germans who, although they come from the country where this sort of thing is being done constantly, would repudiate with horror any suggestion that they would fail to honour any agreement into which they had entered. Yet the German Chancellor to-day makes no secret of the violation of one treaty after another, and then behaves in a manner—I hesitate to use language of the sort—characteristic of the three-card trickster. Document No. 13 contained in the White Paper before us reproduces a voluminous statement by the German Chancellor regarding the terms upon which he would settle the controversy over the Polish Corridor. No one suggests that the terms of the Versailles Treaty leave no room for improvement, or that the conditions prevailing in the Polish Corridor and in the Free City of Danzig were satisfactory. Each of the nations concerned was prepared to examine the position in order to see what could be done to rectify those conditions, just as they negotiated to see what could be done to rectify the grievances of the Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia. On page 18



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

of this document we find the British commentary on this difficulty. It is pointed out that at the time when the German conditions for settlement were broadcast as having been rejected by the Poles, no copy of those terms had been communicated either to the Polish Government or the British Government. Yet, because of the alleged rejection of that proposal by Poland, the head of the German people has launched his people into what may be a long war, and certainly a war that will cause untold suffering, not only to his own people, but also to other peoples in Europe and possibly elsewhere. Then on the following morning, the 1st September, the German Chancellor issued a proclamation to the German army stating that Poland had refused a settlement, and the war was on. The German troops were on the march, and there was no saving of the position. Such behaviour can only recall to our mind the attitude adopted by Germany in 1914, that the treaty providing for the non-violation of Belgian territory, which Germany had solemnly signed, was only a scrap of paper. To-day the same casuistry is happening, only to a greater degree. The position probably could not be worse. The German Chancellor pointed to the terms upon which Germany was prepared to negotiate a settlement, and declared that they had been communicated to Poland and Britain, whereas, in point of fact, the British Government had never received them, whilst the Polish Government had no knowledge of them whatever. Yet the rejection of those terms is the excuse offered to the German people for the German Chancellor's action in waging this war on Poland, although, judging by what has happened in recent years, he could have achieved his objective without resorting to such barbarity as will be practised before this war ends. Whilst I, and probably all honorable Senators, believe that the Germans themselves are a peace-loving people and do not desire to embark on any war, but are prepared to live in amity with their immediate neighbours, the French, and their neighbours across the English Channel, as well as with other nations, it is a curious fact that at intervals throughout history men have arisen in Germany and other lands to fan into flames the embers of age-old hatreds and jealousies between neighbouring countries. Of this tendency I witnessed an illustration when I was at Geneva in 1928 as leader of the Australian Delegation. One day we travelled by car into France. Our passports were examined at the border. We were returning in the evening. We had a Swiss chauffeur, who, on re-entering France, veered his car to the side of the road in order to give way to some cattle. It was market day. Our chauffeur drove our car round the cattle and did everything to avoid disturbing them. Yet a Frenchman who was in charge of the cattle used the most violent language to him.



## WAR

He not only used abusive language, but picked up some loose metal off the road and hurled it at our car. This is an example of the old animosities which die hard in those countries. We know nothing of such hatreds here. We are one people, and we have assimilated those not of our own race who came to live amongst us. But international borders and barriers like those in Europe breed bad feeling. At Geneva I saw the manœuvring that occurred for place and power between the representatives of the countries, regardless of the welfare of humanity, and my heart, which had been given to the peace movement for the sake of all peoples, sank within me. We can secure peace only if we are honest to the core and place peace above everything else. Only then can the ideal which the Leader of the Opposition has expressed, and which all of us in our hearts desire, be attained. But if representatives of a country manœuvre for position and advantage for their own country without paying any regard to the welfare of civilisation in general, these efforts will be doomed to failure. At Geneva I was amazed to see the extraordinary delicacy with which the representatives of each country had to touch every subject in order to avoid giving umbrage to some other country. When Briand threw down his notes and used a word which the press misconstrued as giving offence to Germany, he told me that never again would he speak from the tribune at Geneva without adhering closely to his notes. A chance word had been picked up by the press and circulated throughout Europe, and it gave offence to the German people, who had shown themselves anxious to make a gesture for world peace.

It has been suggested that the regeneration of human nature is required in order to bring about a better condition of affairs, and I am inclined to share that view. What is needed is the inoculation of the human mind with a desire for peace. The combative instinct is strong in all of us. As individuals, we resent insults and physical punishment, and, when masses of people are concerned, such resentment results in catastrophies such as we are enduring to-day. It has been suggested that Christianity has failed, but I prefer to say that human nature has failed Christianity. I have little to add, although there is much that could be said. Our duty, as voiced by the Leader of the Opposition, is plain. We should help Australia to support the Motherland, which is our shield and buckler. We should support our sister Dominion in upholding right against wrong, for we believe that our cause is a righteous one. We should support the rule of law as against the rule of force, and assist the British Empire to police the world, as it has often done in the past. It is gratifying to know that the people of Britain and



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

France realise the principles for which we stand. Britain and its Dominions have taken upon themselves a heavy burden. But if we believe in any of the ideals of which the Leader of the Opposition spoke yesterday, they can be realised only through a bloody Gethsemane. We must assert ourselves at this time in an endeavour to see that in future no such violation of international obligations shall be possible. I believe that there is a growing desire among mankind—although the League of Nations may have failed—to end war as a means of settling international disputes. Until that aim is realised, these catastrophies will occur. From time to time the world produces some leader of men who is capable of inciting the people and leading them down the wrong path, when they could have obtained justice without recourse to the sword.

From Parliamentary Debates, volume 172, page 841; 24th Sept., 1942.

. . . The backward nations of the world, such as India and Egypt, have been the particular care of the Mother Country. Britain has administered, ruled and governed these countries so far as possible with a gloved hand. It has sought to advance their peoples in every way and to protect them against their own civil wars. Were it not for Great Britain's influence, those countries would have been in a constant turmoil. For centuries Britain has been the greatest colonising power in the world. The British people were the first to abandon slavery; they were prepared to fight for that principle which they knew was right. Great Britain has wielded its influence in India for the good of the people. It has protected them from disease, prevented famine, and, with the assistance of the Indian princes, kept peace. A large proportion of the people of India to-day remain loyal to the British Crown. I say these things to — because he has not had the opportunity that I have had to see what has been done in some of those backward countries. It may interest him and other honorable Senators to hear what happened on one occasion when I was travelling through Egypt. With me were two distinguished gentlemen from a country which is very friendly to us at the moment. After they had made a survey of what was being done, they said that the country was in a dreadful state. They pointed out that with machines and other equipment work could be done in a way which would seem incredible to people who were not familiar with modern methods. I asked them if they had ever thought what the result of such changes would be upon a backward people, who throughout the ages had worked with their hands in their own way. Britain has placed a guiding hand on all of these backward



## WAR

countries. There is no suggestion that India may not some day be a self-governing Dominion. Some Indians have attended universities in Great Britain, with dire results sometimes to the Motherland, because they have gone back to their own country with rather inflamed minds. These countries must be nursed, and peace must be preserved in them. The people must have something to occupy their minds. They must earn their living in the old-fashioned ways that have been adopted for centuries. They must even have their little carts drawn by oxen, and must cultivate their small plots of land. These methods seem to us to be far behind the times, but heaven forbid that we should alter their customs too firmly or let loose those forces which in some of these countries divide the people as no other people have been divided. Religious fanaticism and zeal have probably cost more human lives than great wars.

Britain has acted as it has in order to preserve the peace and contentment of the people of India. Nobody knows better than that long line of statemen who have succeeded one another in Britain how to handle problems such as those of India. Certain promises have been made to that country and they will be kept. I do not think that those promises are needed in order to ensure the loyalty of the Indians. Their representatives have attended conferences at Geneva with an enthusiasm for peace which is remarkable. It is true that Lord Lytton led them, but their cultured outlook and reverence for the British form of government amazed me. Let us leave alone those things which do not concern us. The Mother Country has managed for centuries, to the advantage of the Indians, to protect them, and will manage to preserve the great Indian Empire as part of our Commonwealth of Nations. The King Emperor is still the Emperor of India, and will so remain. The people of India have a promise ratified by the British Parliament that self-government will be granted to them at the proper time. This is not the time for us, or for the people of any other part of the Empire, or for India itself to raise this difficult matter. India is threatened by a foe that would not treat Indians as the British have done. It would not treat them with those principles of kindness and help that have characterised British administration there. We may be reminded that Clive and Hastings have governed in India. We subdued India, and we had to do it in the interests of the people of that country. It may be remarked that we are taking similar action in Madagascar to-day for another reason, but dire necessity compels our forces to go to Madagascar, and it was dire necessity that compelled Britain to impose its administration on India for the benefit of that race, which



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

is divided in a manner that could lead only to fatal consequences to India itself if the guiding hand of Britain were withdrawn. . . .

I carried on my work in the Senate as the representative of my State for the balance of the term for which I had been elected. I made contributions to various debates. I append an extract from one of these contributions:—

“From a close observation that I have been compelled to make, in another capacity, of the establishment of factories for the production of aircraft and all types of munitions required for the defence of this country, I realise that previous governments are entitled to that credit which, on more than one occasion, has been freely given to them by the Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin), for laying the foundations of production. We know the difficulties with which those governments were faced in regard to the shortage of machine tools and other essential supplies. I do not propose to say anything about that matter because the points raised by honorable Senators opposite have been answered adequately already, but I shall address myself to a certain matter which was raised by the Leader of the Senate. That honorable gentleman said that this measure—Defence (Citizen Military Forces) Bill 1943—had been unfairly criticised on the ground that the restricted area of service would prevent Australian troops from rescuing our prisoners of war on the Malay Peninsula. The Leader of the Senate claimed that that was wringing the hearts of those unfortunate people who had friends or relatives in prison camps there, but in my opinion the hearts of these people will be wrung a great deal more when they realise that the Government will not have power under this bill to send Australian soldiers forward to engage in that rescue work. As has been pointed out by previous speakers, those matters are the concern of the Government, but it has been fearful to accept responsibility. The Opposition does not ask the Government to send troops anywhere except where it is advised to send them or where its conscience dictates that they should be sent. The Government must determine where the troops shall go after obtaining the advice of the High Command. What was asked in the joint letter forwarded to the Government by members of the Opposition in both branches of the legislature was that the Government should not be leg-roped, as at present, because of lack of power to send the Citizen Military Forces where required.

“As Senator McBride remarked, this bill indicates a retreat from an ill-founded policy to which the Labour Party subscribed for many years. It has been a fetish and almost a religion with that party that



## WAR

Australian troops should not be compelled to serve overseas, although the Australian Imperial Force, the Royal Australian Navy and the Royal Australian Air Force have so distinguished themselves overseas that they have brought credit to this country. According to the Government, as must be judged by this bill, members of the Citizen Military Forces must be used in the defence of Australia only after this country has been ravished by invasion. But for the prompt action taken 18 months ago, Australia would have been in imminent peril of invasion. If the enemy were to obtain a footing in New Zealand, Australia would be in grave danger, yet New Zealand has been left outside the ambit of this bill. The gist of the measure is a request for a very limited power to send the Militia to an area beyond the boundaries of the Commonwealth and its territories. The contents of the bill have not been dictated by the High Command, which put into the mouth of the Prime Minister the statement that one army and one command were essential for the defence of this country. Honorable Senators opposite had in mind a high command in the political arena. The Opposition desires power to be given to the government of the day to say, if it thinks fit, that there shall be one command and one army for the defence of Australia, but the area to which our troops may be sent should not be limited on the north by the Equator, and New Zealand should not be excluded. We should not exclude Malaya and Singapore where our boys are sweating away their lives to-day.

"Every honorable Senator will join in the great tribute paid by the Leader of the Senate to General MacArthur. The Minister declared that a contract had been entered into to stand with the United Nations. In this global war there should be no limit to our contribution in men, money and material, but this bill is the very negation of such an effort. I welcome the change of heart displayed by the Government on the subject of compulsory military service. This has come about in the face of dire necessity."

The Prime Minister's death early in 1939 brought about a very unsettled state amongst the Government's supporters. There was first a Prime Minister from the Liberal Party and next a Prime Minister from the Country Party. Both of these gentlemen it was expected would retain the loyalty of their followers. It was not to be, however, and the late Mr. Curtin ultimately sat in the Prime Minister's chair, not, however, before the spade work for gearing the nation to war had been well laid by his predecessors, and it is flattering testimony to their wisdom and foresight that he made little or



no alterations in the personnel of the machinery that they had employed to further our war effort.

I had been requested by the head of the Government to render some service as Chairman of the War Expenditure Committee, and this I did at some inconvenience to myself. Special provision was made to enable the Chairman to report confidentially to the Prime Minister. This I did from time to time with a view to having remedied by ministerial action a number of abuses.

I was struck during the inspection of many factories by the rapidity with which our young folk mastered the details of somewhat intricate machinery, and appeared to enjoy their occupations. I made some enquiries from the executive officers as to whence they came and as to how they had been trained. To my astonishment I was informed that the bulk of them had been land workers and had no previous mechanical experience, but had been taken into schools and taught to operate these automatons which one finds in nearly all large manufacturing establishments. I could scarcely understand how the Australian who was a lover of outdoor life could reconcile himself to moving a handle, or pressing some gear in a particular manner as the operation in which he was engaged passed him by on an interminable belt. It appeared to me as if my race were becoming mechanically minded, apparently a feature of the age in which we live. This may be desirable from some points of view, particularly that of defence, but we may find that it is not so advantageous to humanity as the application of their skill to the production of foodstuffs for the world.

I was struck by the executive ability of many men associated with the war effort, and I was also struck by the astuteness of some companies in arranging the annexes which were provided by the Government in such a manner as to place the company working them in a very strong position at the conclusion of the war. The annexes were so arranged as to be worked most advantageously in connection with the factory previously in existence.



## WAR

My organisation in South Australia called for nominations for the Senate in 1943. In the meantime I relinquished my city residence in Melbourne and moved into a small grazing property some 13 miles from the city. I had taken chambers and practised as a barrister in Melbourne. Medical advice was in favour of my remaining in a cooler climate to benefit my wife's health, and I had established myself at the centre where I still live. I had some doubt as to whether I would be selected for the Senate, but nevertheless nominated for selection. I failed by a somewhat narrow margin to secure the third place, and for the moment I was rather disappointed, and, it may be, humiliated that I, who had been one of the founders of the organisation, the spirit that had contrived the erection of the Liberal Club buildings, could not secure more than 8 primary votes in a poll of some 200 on the executive. There are always others looking for one's place in politics, and I, I fear, was regarded as a Victorian. I was no longer in practice in South Australia. My residence was in Victoria. The following is an extract from Personal Items, appearing in "The Bulletin" of September, 1943:—

"A. J. McLachlan, former P.M.G. and twice Acting Attorney-General, has been winding up his affairs in S.A., where the L.C.L. dropped him from its Senate nominations—as it transpired, luckily for McLachlan. He's particularly proud of the steady rise of the lawyers who studied under him. As a partner to C. C. Kingston long ago, he had in the office Napier, now Chief Justice of S.A., and Richards, now Judge. Both Napier and Reed (the latest appointment to the Bench) became in time Mac's own partners. Further, Muirhead, P.M., and Lempriere Abbott, the latest K.C., were both in the office of McLachlan and Napier. A. J. has bought the Septimus Miller place outside Melbourne, and is likely to be heard of further as a good Victorian."

My end in politics was in sight, but I continued to discharge my duties and attend the sittings of the Senate with the greatest regularity.

My colleagues there I think regretted my departure, but



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

my failure to get the selection may have been fortunate, as the team selected on the Liberal side was defeated.

I was made the recipient of a brace of most excellent pipes on my departure, and some very flattering remarks were made by the Leader of the Government,—who was then of a different political colour,—the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Country Party. In replying, I advised them in the following manner: By leave of the Senate, I was enabled to thank Senators, and said—"I shall violate Standing Orders by addressing honourable Senators on this occasion as 'my friends'" and continued, after expressing my thanks for the loyalty of the service and my gratitude generally, to point out that "without such a tradition Parliamentary Government could not be carried on effectively. . . . After a very lengthy experience in the working of parliamentary government, I urge the leaders of the people to ensure that the people, and members of Parliament themselves, stand fast by the principle of parliamentary government. Therein lies the safety of our democracy. No institution has ever reached the pinnacle of splendour, or maintained the position that parliamentary government under the British system has achieved in British countries throughout the world. The British system of parliamentary government is the envy of the world. My last words to the Senate, by way of advice, if I may put it in that way, are to stand fast by parliamentary government. There are men on my side of the chamber, and probably on the other side, sufficiently young in years to return to the political arena. So far as I am concerned, it is 'Farewell.' In thanking you, Mr. President, the two leaders and honourable Senators generally for the kindly expression of goodwill towards me and my two colleagues, I simply say—

'Farewell! A word that must be, and hath been—  
A sound which makes us linger;—yet—Farewell!'"

For a time I missed the life, but one gets reconciled to



## WAR

being a spectator and watching the game—for it is a game—of party politics.

I give my attention still as Chairman to the Hume Pipe Company and its associate companies. I watch the growth of a small stud flock which I have attached to my property here, and I marvel at the devastating effect the war has had on the moral outlook of the community.



## THE OUTLOOK

As regards material matters, Australia is probably the most fortunate country in the world. It has opportunities at the moment for advancement which are most marked, and one has great regret that these opportunities are not availed of to a greater extent. We have emerged from the war with a largely increased indebtedness, but with our country practically intact. We cannot escape entirely from reactions in world conditions, and we stand on the threshold of countries turbulent in the extreme, countries with a different outlook, and populated by peoples whose standards are far below our own, people who have so recently emerged from servitude as not to understand real liberty.

Australia may have looked with hope on the promise of world peace to be secured by world agreement. We looked with hope more than a quarter of a century ago to the League of Nations, and to-day we might ask ourselves, What is the outlook? The answer at the moment is 'ominous and dark.'

The larger portion of the Asiatic world is engaged in internecine strife. Our dove of peace coos at New York, and nothing to stem the tide of riot and revolution within certain countries obtains.

We stand with our sister dominion of New Zealand as lonely sentinels on the borders of countries of a different colour, of different standards and of different creeds from our own. We are a handful of people with high standards and with strong desires to make good our place in the world, and yet, within our own borders, notwithstanding our vaunted civilisation, we are unable to carry on in harmony. Surely our own safety and the paucity of our numbers should induce us to pull together. The danger of the future is too



## THE OUTLOOK

manifest to need any elaboration. Yet we struggle with each other under the guise of bettering our conditions, and we appear to overlook the danger at our gates. We sever ourselves into political groups, and conflict rages amongst them.

I venture the opinion that a certain political faction known as the Labour Party has no logical political outlook short of communism, for communism, rugged and all as it be, cruel and irreligious as it may seem, at all events offers in the abstract a logical outcome of its efforts to enthrall mankind. That it may have failed, as it has failed in Russia, does not detract from the abstract theory that it advances for world rule. It is conservative in many respects, and as we know the new Russian constitution affords evidences of its innate conservatism. Written into it is the somewhat disconcerting paragraph, "He that doth not work, neither shall he eat," taken from the old Mosaic law.

Labour on the other hand, apart from its socialistic outlook, offers no definite objective of value to mankind. You socialise this and you socialise that, and what benefit accrues is quite beyond comprehension. There is less revenue, there is less income upon which to levy those charges which enable the government to provide the wherewithal for those who do not work. I say again, there is no logical resting-place for the political party known as Labour short of communism.

Communism may savour of the autocrat, of the government by the few, of the elevation of the few to positions and places of power and authority, but at all events it does govern. Labour engages in anæmic platitudes and promises which can be fulfilled only by avoiding further State socialism. The conflict between communism and Labour is upon us, and is causing, by the disruptive tactics of the former, a tremendous amount of unrest and disturbance throughout the length and breadth of Australia.

I venture to think that when the disturbing mental factors of the great war have toned down sufficiently, there will be an awakening. Faction fighting is inevitable between forces of Labour and of communism. Labour has in the past wooed



the communistic vote and, forsooth, has oft-times won it. At the same time it has accused its political opponents of the Liberal Party of getting the support of that section to which Labour has to bend its knee to-day.

The great hope of any country is the middle-class, not the wild, screaming, long-haired agitator, but the well-balanced fellow that marches to his work day by day and discharges his duty to his country. For years he has kept the balance in France, only recently, however, to be submerged by wild theories based not upon the realities of life, but upon dreams. In the larger arena of international relations, where millions of human lives are involved, mankind has been unable to co-operate. But surely amongst people of the same race, with a decent outlook and with centuries of civilisation behind them, we should be able to see that the dreary doctrines of Karl Marx are impossible of attainment, even if they were desirable.

The world to-day is ravaged, as I have indicated, by an upsurge of a lip desire for freedom which is only cover for a real desire for power. The question is whether the race with hundreds of years of civilisation and sound thinking behind it can maintain its place by its level-headedness in what might well be characterised as a mad world. Famine stalks through innumerable lands. In the wake of famine we will find revolt and revolution. The supremacy of the white races is being challenged, and is there any wonder? The first world war awakened sleeping instincts in the Far East. There the masses saw the most cultured of the European races engaged in a war of destruction. They saw the most foul methods adopted for the killing of those so-called superior civilisations, and they bethought themselves that in that line they could be quite as successful as those to whom they had looked as superior beings with a superior civilisation. And again, in the recent world war they have seen methods employed between those so-called superior white races that have left them with a view that the white man, with all his vaunted civilisation, is not one whit better than the untutored



## THE OUTLOOK

savage, and, forsooth, they arise and make war, a war disastrous to themselves, but war which has stimulated ideas in the minds of the more cunning of the coloured races, ideas that will contribute to their self-aggrandisement, ideas of nationhood, and these lurk under a promise of freedom to their peoples, a freedom which they never really can enjoy. Famine, disease and red revolution stalk to-day in lands which probably contain one-quarter of the human race. Fiery adventurers abound in many countries, availing themselves of this period of unrest to loot to their own aggrandisement. And the world looks on, and our new League of Nations engages in some vitriolic if high-class debate as to what is to be done, but accomplishes nothing.

The fate of India to-day is merely a fulfilment of what everybody expected on the relinquishment of control by the British raj. The State of Java, hidden as it is under the garb of a clamour for nationalism, is another illustration of what one expected to happen. China is engaging in an internecine strife. It is merely a struggle for power. Palestine presents a pretty spectacle. That great humanitarian, Balfour, he of the high ideals and great morality, looked to this country to alleviate the inhuman sufferings of millions of the Jewish people throughout the world, and to-day those whom he sought to relieve are waging a war of revolt, not only against the Britons who were their well-wishers, but against the Arab as well. The Arab, notwithstanding all that Britain has done, and its friendship for Moslems throughout the world, takes his revenge at odd periods against his erstwhile friend, the Briton. And Britain cries aloud that the burden is too much and it will withdraw from Palestine and hand the responsibilities to the united nations, who, I venture to think, shiver at the very prospect. Shades of Christ and Christianity! Palestine will probably see another crucifixion unless the sanity of the better elements can prevail in the ranks of the united nations.

In a world torn asunder by wreckers, by careerists, by men with a lust for power, using various purposes and institutions



## McLACHLAN: AN F.A.Q. AUSTRALIAN

for their own particular ends, Britain struggles on, and as I see it, there is but one hope for the prevention of worse ills than those that obtain to-day, and that is a combination of the British speaking races with the more stable Nordic peoples of Europe. If the spirit of Hitler is capable of seeing and understanding the state of the world to-day, his mental attitude must be one of great enjoyment. He threw a spanner in the wheel of civilisation, and, like the maniac he was, he must be dancing in exuberant fury and glee at the wreckage he has caused.

THE END.



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